

# **Institution name: University of West London**

## **Legal Practice Course (LPC) profile June 2017**

**Please note:** The information contained in this profile is supplied by the University of West London; it is the provider's responsibility to keep this information up-to-date.

### **Introduction from the SRA**

The SRA's requirements allow providers considerable freedom to design and focus their courses to meet the needs of particular student cohorts and particular types of legal practice. Providers have a corresponding responsibility to provide clear and useful information to those making choices about where to study and which particular course to follow. To enable potential students to make informed choices, the SRA requires all providers to supply a standard set of information about their provision.

### **General information**

As a longstanding provider of academic and professional legal education, the University of West London's Law School has extensive experience of delivering the Legal Practice Course, both full-time and part-time. Our LPC has been running since 1994 and aims to provide students with a high quality, cost effective and supportive learning experience which will allow them to acquire all the ingredients for professional success: a sound knowledge of law and procedure; a practical and structured approach to legal work; commercial awareness; professional discipline; time-management skills and networking opportunities with the legal profession. Students will learn from the practical application of law, procedure and regulation in cases based on real life scenarios.

Our Law School is based in Ealing, a pleasant and vibrant suburb of west London, which has excellent rail, underground and bus links to central London and easy access out to Reading, Oxford and the south, west and north.

### **Types of LPC**

At UWL we are now offering the LPC in a flexible form. All students will initially be enrolled on the LLM Legal Practice Course. This incorporates both stages 1 and 2 of the LPC (the professional qualification you will need to become a solicitor) and also provides students with an opportunity to do an optional Research Methodology module and a dissertation to upgrade their LPC into a Masters award.

#### **Option 1**

Once on the LLM Legal Practice Course you can choose to do only stages 1 and 2, without the additional LLM elements. On successful completion of stages 1 and 2 you will then exit with the traditional Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice, having covered all the compulsory professional elements.

#### **Option 2**

Alternatively you can do the complete LLM Legal Practice Course. This offers LPC students an optional Masters module on top of the modules required for the traditional professional Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice. Students will be given the opportunity to study Research Methodology and to research and write a 15,000 word dissertation on an area related to legal practice.

In addition to the above, students can study the course on either a full-time or part-time basis. Alternatively students can study stages 1 and 2 separately, either full-time or part-time. Part-time provision is on a day release basis. More details can be found at [www.uwl.ac.uk](http://www.uwl.ac.uk).

### **Key features of the different LPC courses**

The course aims to provide a general foundation for legal practice in order to give students a broad range of opportunities in the legal market place. Previous University of West London LPC graduates can be found in many legal work environments: as solicitors and partners in private practice; in not for profit organisations; in legal departments within companies and Local Authorities; in the Crown Prosecution Service; Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service and the Government Legal Service. The curriculum and the choice of vocational electives are therefore designed to provide a broad base of experience.

Teaching is by tutors who are all qualified solicitors with practice experience ranging from City to High Street practice.

We know very well the demands placed on students by the LPC. A great deal of emphasis is therefore given to supporting students as individuals and monitoring their progress, and a high degree of contact time with tutors and peers is arranged to facilitate this. The full-time stage 1 course requires attendance at the university for between 2-3 days per week and the part-time stage 1 course is delivered one day a week in year one and one day and an evening in year two. Attendance for stage 2 of the course depends on the number and type of electives chosen. Each elective has 3.5 contact hours per week. Attendance is compulsory and monitored, to maximise progress and a successful outcome for students. Further study support is available via remote access to legal databases and course materials from PCs with internet connection.

If you choose to take the LLM option with the Research Methodology and Dissertation module you will do this in stage 2 of the LPC from March to May together with your electives. This will be in year 2 of your studies if you are a part-time student. It will require attendance at an additional class during stage 2. You will then complete the dissertation over the summer.

If you choose just to do the part-time Postgraduate Diploma route you can complete stages 1 and 2 in 18 months or two years, dependent on your choice of vocational electives.

The LPC maintains very close links with the Middlesex Law Society, the University's own qualified alumni and local practitioners, on both a professional and social level. These provide students with opportunities to meet and network with members of the profession, including free attendance at legal practice lectures and presentations, joint social events, and participation in legal work experience. There is also an opportunity for students to participate in the Law School's Community Advice Programme, providing free legal advice to the local community.

### **Maximum number of students in the different types of teaching and learning Sessions**

Students will all be taught in interactive small group sessions in teaching groups of on average 20-25 students. Group sizes are frequently much smaller in the vocational elective subjects.

### **Maximum number of students it will recruit onto each course**

We are validated to provide up to 60 full-time equivalent places. There will be a mixture of full-time and part-time students.

### **Entry requirements**

Applicants should normally have one of the following:

- A qualifying law degree with at least second class honours; or
- A Common Professional Examination or Graduate Diploma in Law pass with an average of at least 50%.

Students may be accepted with lesser academic qualifications (subject always to meeting the SRA's requirements for completion of the academic stage of training) - if they have strengths in other areas (eg legal work experience) or can satisfy us that there were extenuating circumstances which adversely affected their previous academic performance. There are other entry routes such as fellowship of the Institute of Legal Executives.

### **Policy on Stages 1 and 2**

We offer flexible routes to completion of the LPC – students can enrol for stages 1 and 2 combined, or stage 1 or stage 2 only, part-time or full-time. Students who have studied stage 1 with another provider will be accepted to study stage 2 provided that they can demonstrate successful prior completion of stage 1.

### **Academic qualification that will be awarded to successful students**

Students who successfully complete stage 1 only will be awarded the University's Postgraduate Certificate in Legal Practice. Those who successfully complete stages 1 and 2 will be awarded the University's Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice. Those students from other providers who enrol for stage 2 only and are subsequently successful can be awarded the University's Postgraduate Diploma (with accreditation of their prior learning granting them exemptions from stage 1 at UWL) .

### **Learning resources available to support the course, including library and IT Provision**

Students benefit from a large, well-equipped base room in which only LPC classes are timetabled. The room has restricted access and contains PCs networked to the Library and printing facilities. PCs allow access to Oyez legal forms, legal databases and resources, the University's virtual learning environment, the internet and other resources for use in and outside classes. PowerPoint, Smart Board and data projection facilities are also in place.

Students further benefit from a dedicated law area within the spacious and well-equipped Paul Hamlyn Library opened in September 2015. The library provides access to a wealth of electronic research resources including LexisLibrary and WestLaw, and many paper based resources including practitioner texts and loose leafs covering the compulsory and elective subjects, Halsbury's Laws of England, Halsbury's Statutes, the Encyclopaedia of Forms and Precedents and many other resources. There are published guides to obtaining training contracts and subscriptions to the Law Society Gazette for students' use. More information on the library can be found at <http://www.uwl.ac.uk/library/new-library-space>.

The University subscribes to the BlackBoard electronic learning environment. Within this there is an LPC site, providing students with access to their LPC modules and, within those, a list of folders containing learning materials, handouts, practice exercises, PowerPoint presentations, feedback, online resources and useful web links.

There is also a section of the LPC BlackBoard site on which are posted matters of general interest, such as careers information, timetables, the student handbook, work experience opportunities and useful websites. In addition, the careers department communicates details of training contracts and paralegal opportunities through the medium of BlackBoard.

All students have a University email address provided to them, which is used for University and Library briefings, as well as for LPC matters. Students receive specific training in the use of the IT system and BlackBoard at the start of the course.

### **Percentage of teaching staff who are qualified as solicitors or barristers**

100%. All LPC tutors are qualified solicitors.

### **Percentage of teaching staff with higher level teaching qualification**

Of the permanent staff three tutors (60%) have a higher level post-graduate teaching certificate, one (20%) has a PGCE and three tutors (60%) are fellows of the Higher Education Academy, which recognises professionalism in teaching and learning in Higher Education.

All tutors are required to attend internal training on teaching and learning as part of their staff development. All tutors participate in peer appraisals of their teaching and in the University's annual performance review scheme.

### **Teaching staff profile**

All tutors are qualified solicitors. In addition to full-time and part-time permanent members of staff the LPC teaching team includes one visiting lecturer from legal practice.

Some tutors from the core teaching team have additional responsibilities in relation to the delivery of the LPC. Further details in relation to tutor roles on the LPC can be found the LPC Student Handbook and tutor profiles are also available on the Law School website: <http://www.uwl.ac.uk/academic-schools/law/our-staff>

All LPC tutors are required to keep up to date with developments in law and practice in their areas of expertise. Some continue to undertake legal practice and others attend legal update training and / or other "return to practice" activities to keep abreast with current developments. A number have engaged in other professional activities such as authorship of books and publications, delivery of accredited legal professional training and external examining for the LPC.

### **Fees 2017-18**

#### **UK/EU Students**

Full-time LPC, Stages 1 and 2 combined £10,950

Full-time LPC, Stage 1 only £8,200

Full time LPC, Stage 2 only £2,750

#### **Part-time LPC Year 1 (2017-2018)**

Part-time LPC, Stage 1 part 1 £4,100

Part-time LPC, Stage 2 - per elective £950

An early payment discount of approximately 5% is available. Previous University of West London LLB/GDL students normally benefit from a significant discount – this cannot be claimed in conjunction with any other discount.

## **Pastoral support, including dedicated careers guidance staff**

### **Pastoral Support**

We know the pressures that students face, both on the LPC and in trying to achieve their career ambitions, and we have consequently put in place effective mechanisms to support them. Students rate highly the support they receive from staff.

Pastoral support is on three levels and is designed to provide individual, tailored support for students:

1. Personal Tutor System
2. Student Appraisal Scheme
3. University Support Services

#### Personal Tutor System

Each LPC student is allocated a personal tutor. There will be a formal meeting with the personal tutor as part of the student appraisal scheme. Personal tutors help induct the students into the nature and demands of the course and the facilities and services available for student support. They are the first point of contact if students have personal difficulties which affect their studies.

#### Student Appraisal Scheme

There is a formal student appraisal scheme whereby students meet their tutors for a discussion on their preparation, contribution and performance on the course, as evaluated by subject tutors. This is designed to support students by a process of affirmation if students are performing well, or to provide timely advice and support for those who are underperforming.

#### University Support Services

The University offers a full range of support services for students such as disability support, medical services, counselling, financial and housing services.

### **Careers Support**

The University Careers and Employment Service, with Matrix accreditation, provides excellent careers support, including a series of legal careers seminars specifically designed for the University's LPC students including:

1. Skills analysis and development.
2. The legal job market, commercial awareness and the use of social media.
3. Drafting successful law CVs, applications, letters and interview techniques.

Students are also guided to law related websites and specialist legal recruitment agencies, to help them in their search for training contracts and legal work experience.

Our students receive further individual support in drafting CVs and applications, preparing for interviews and having mock interviews. The Careers Service continues to build up its contacts with solicitors' firms and a number now approach the University when looking to recruit trainees and other legal personnel. Job advertisements and training contract opportunities are disseminated from the Careers Service and are posted electronically. Students who register with the Careers Service are also notified by email.

Building a good CV is vital and students are encouraged to participate in our legal work experience opportunities and practitioner events available at the University or with other organisations with which we have contacts.

The Careers Service continues to support LPC students for up to three years after they leave, including by email alerts of legal work and training contract opportunities. After that, careers support is indefinite if students join the Alumni association. Our students speak very highly of the support they receive.

### **Contact details**

For further information, please contact the provider direct:

Website: [www.uwl.ac.uk](http://www.uwl.ac.uk)

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