

Programme Specification 2021-22

MASTER OF CORPORATE LAW

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	Faculty of Law
Accreditation details	None
Name of final award	Master of Corporate Law
Programme title	Master of Corporate Law
HECoS code(s)	100482 (business law)
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
Qualifications framework level	7 (Masters)
Date specification was produced	8 June 2022

Aims of the programme

(a) Knowledge and Understanding

- To enable students of the highest calibre from around the world to pursue their studies in corporate law at an advanced level.
- To provide students with opportunities to pursue corporate law courses which build on and develop in greater depth material which they have studied at undergraduate level.
- To provide students with opportunities to pursue corporate law courses of a specialist nature, in areas too advanced or too focused to be included in an undergraduate degree course or general Masters-level programme.
- To enable students to advance their understanding of law as a distinctive social institution, especially in relation to matters of policy and principle.
- To provide opportunities to learn within a cosmopolitan atmosphere, thereby encouraging a comparative approach among students and staff.
- To enable students to engage in work which is innovative and at the leading edge of legal scholarship.

(b) Skills and other attributes

- To facilitate the growth of legal and general transferable skills already developed by students during their undergraduate studies.

Programme outcomes

The criteria for admission to the MCL course are very demanding. On this basis it is assumed that students taking the course are already appropriately knowledgeable in corporate law and that they possess the skills and the independence necessary to pursue a degree at masters level. Admission for those whose native language is not English is dependent upon demonstrating a high level of proficiency in English.

By the end of the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding

- (a) Knowledge and understanding at an advanced level of the subject areas chosen for study, including a critical awareness of current issues and debates at the forefront of the areas concerned.

Opportunities: All students choose a corporate-oriented full-year Masters-level paper and the compulsory full-year Deals paper, as well as four MCL-specific corporate law modules. Numerous opportunities are provided to specialise in a number of areas of corporate law.

- (b) The ability to understand and make use of a range of perspectives on corporate law issues, viewed from various and complementary perspectives.

Opportunities: Subjects offered provide opportunities to examine corporate law issues from a range of perspectives, including a transactional angle by way of the Deals paper and comparative and financial analysis by way of the modules.

Teaching methods: (1) **Seminars and lectures** provide students with an overview of the whole area of each course, framing and stimulating students' personal consideration of the material covered, and often providing a distinctive, original perspective on the subject. (2) **Seminars and workshops**, for which prior preparation is required, provide opportunities for discussion with lecturers, practitioners, and with other students and for development of appropriate techniques of analysis and argument. (3) **Student presentations and practitioner feedback** form an important part of the Deals course. Students give presentations on deals they have considered, the quality of which is assessed as part of their overall grade. Distinguished legal practitioners attend the presentations and provide feedback.

The precise teaching format varies depending upon the nature of the subject and the size of the class. Some courses are taught by means of lectures, sometimes accompanied by small-group classes, while other courses are taught by means of seminars.

Means of assessment: The basic means of assessment is by formal, written, unseen examinations for the full-year corporate-oriented paper and for the modules. For the full-year Deals course, assessment is in the form of course work and assessment of student presentations (see above).

Skills and other attributes

Intellectual skills

- Ability to understand, analyse and interpret complex primary and secondary legal materials, including case-law, statutory materials and academic writings.
- Ability to analyse and evaluate critically complex contractual documentation.
- Ability to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.
- Ability to apply legal rules to factual situations.
- Ability to develop a coherent argument or view from disparate materials.
- Ability to form conclusions supported by rational argument.
- Ability to think critically and independently about legal rules and institutions.
- Ability to engage critically with emerging issues and debates.

Development: These skills are possessed at a high level by those admitted to the course. They are further developed throughout the MCL programme, in particular through instruction by lecturers, through formal and informal discussion with lecturers and other students, and by students themselves in preparing for lectures, small-group classes or seminars and preparing presentations for the Deals course.

Assessment: These skills are assessed summatively at an advanced level by formal written examinations, which may include both the application of legal rules to

(hypothetical) factual situations and critical analysis of the rules, by the submission of course work and by assessment of student presentations.

Research skills

- Ability to identify and locate source material independently on a range of subjects, including reports and statutory material, both in paper form and online.
- Ability to understand and assess the reliability, currency, relevance and relative importance of, and relationships between, source materials.
- Ability to use indexes and digests, both in paper form and online, for assistance in handling large quantities of source material, and to use these skills in areas not previously studied.
- Ability to make effective and independent use of libraries and other information resources.
- Ability to research legal rules necessary to understand and engage with complex contractual documentation.

Development: These skills are possessed at a high level by those admitted to the course. The induction programme includes a session on the peculiar features of common law systems and method, geared especially (but not exclusively) to students from a non-common law background. Training in the use of online resources is available from the Legal IT Teaching and Development Officer. These skills are further developed in private study of primary sources, in preparing for lectures and/or small-group classes or seminars or in researching course work. The Faculty has produced guidance for students on avoiding plagiarism.

Assessment: These skills are assessed formatively through participation in small-group classes or seminars and summatively through formal written examinations and the examination of course work.

Communication and literacy skills

- Ability to marshal arguments lucidly, coherently, logically and concisely.
- Ability to make correct, accurate and effective use of written and spoken English including specialist legal terminology.
- Ability to explain why and how complex contractual documentation should be amended to serve the interests of clients.
- Ability to present material in a clear and effective way, in both oral and written form, in all cases showing sensitivity to the diverse perspectives of the intended audience or readership.

Development: Students are only admitted if they have a high level of attainment in the use of English. Oral skills are further developed by giving presentations in the Deals course and by participation in lectures, small-group classes or seminars. Written skills may be further developed by the preparation of course work.

Assessment: Oral skills are assessed formatively through evaluation of student presentations in the Deals course. Written skills are assessed summatively through formal written examinations and through the examination of course work.

Interpersonal skills

- Ability to work creatively, flexibly and sensitively with others.
- Ability to interact successfully on a one-to-one basis.
- Capacity to respect different viewpoints.
- Ability to learn independently and to develop appropriate mechanisms for support and feedback.

Development: These skills are developed through presentations given as part of the Deals course, which are given in teams. There is also co-operative learning occurring by way of small-group classes or seminars or in informal discussion and working-groups, and by participation in the wider life of colleges, the Faculty and the University, for example through membership and officership of University and College societies (including the Cambridge University Graduate Law Society) and through participation in sport, music or drama. The cosmopolitan atmosphere of the course provides opportunities to interact with a range of viewpoints and differing legal and cultural backgrounds. The structure of the programme requires substantial independence in learning. The formation of support groups is encouraged as a way of providing appropriate support. The student should be able to identify learning needs, to give feedback, and to accept feedback from peers and teachers.

Assessment: These skills, and in particular the ability to learn co-operatively, are reflected in the outcome of formal assessment, most directly by way of student presentations for the Deals course.

Organisational skills

- Capacity for self-motivation, self-direction and self-discipline.
- Ability to act proactively and to take the initiative.
- Ability to write and think under pressure and to meet deadlines.
- Ability to manage time and resources.

Development: These skills are developed through students' presentations for the Deals course, the organisation of work-programmes, in particular in preparation for lectures and/or small-group classes or seminars and through management of extracurricular activities so that they complement and do not detract from course-related activities, and through membership and officership of societies.

Assessment: These skills are reflected in the outcome of formal assessment.

Programme structure

The programme is a full-time, 9 month course. Admission to the programme is by application to the Faculty through the Postgraduate Admissions Office, followed by application to a college.

Qualification for the degree requires a pass in the MCL Examination held at the end of each term for the modules, in the course work and in those Examinations held at the end of the course. Students in the MCL Examination are classed.

All students take four modules, the full-year Deals course plus a full-year corporate-oriented course also available to LLM students. The Deals course is compulsory. Otherwise the precise range of papers available varies from year to year.

Further information on the MCL course may be found in the *MCL Handbook* and in the Faculty's *Marking Criteria* and *Classing Conventions*, as well as on the Faculty website.

Management of teaching quality and standards

The University ensures high standards of teaching and learning in the following ways:

- The completion of Annual Quality Updates by each Faculty and Department, to enable central overview of provision and assist in dissemination of good practice
- Scrutiny of the reports of External Examiners for all teaching programmes
- Encouraging student engagement through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees
- Holding reflective, centrally-coordinated, Learning and Teaching Reviews for all teaching institutions every six years to explore provision and suggest constructive courses of action
- Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

Graduate Employability and career destinations

The Careers Service maintains links with relevant employers and takes into account employer needs and opinions in the services which it provides for students. The Careers Service also allocates a Careers Adviser to each College, Faculty and Department to act as a point of contact.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the *Reporter*. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: <https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/>