



HKU
LAW

Faculty of Law
The University of Hong Kong

Information Kit for Employers (2020-2021)

~ 2023 Trainee Candidates ~

Our Programmes

Programme	LLB	BBA(Law) & LLB	BSS(GL) & LLB	BA & LLB	HKU-UCL Dual Law Programme	HKU-PKU Dual Law Programme	JD	PCLL
Duration	4 years	5 years	5 years	5 years	4 years	5 years	2 years	Full time: 1 year Part time: 2 years
First year intake (2020-2021)	95 - 105	65 - 75	45 - 55	15 - 25	10	6	40	Full time: 300 Part time: 100
Final Year Tuition Fee for local students, HK\$ (2020-2021, for reference only)	42,100 p.a.	85,000 p.a.	85,000 p.a.	85,000 p.a.	42,100 p.a. (for last 2 years study at HKU, i.e. for academic years 2020-21 and 2020-22)	42,100 p.a. (for first 2.5 years study at HKU)	200,000 p.a.	Govt-funded: 42,100 p.a. (Local) 171,000 p.a. (Non-local) Self-financed: Full time: 184,500 p.a. Part time: 107,000 p.a.
Admission Statistics (2020-2021) – Average Scores of JUPAS Applications								
English	6.854	6.933	7.402	8.000	Not applicable			
Chinese	5.986	6.523	6.415	6.083				
Best 6 electives	38.799	41.172	40.207	41.417				

Note: Conversion of the HKDSE grades into scores: Level 5** = 8.5, 5* = 7, 5 = 5.5, 4 = 4, 3 = 3, 2 = 2, 1 = 1, unclassified/ others = 0.

Programme Structure

Compulsory Law subjects taken by 2023 Trainee candidates – JD (*italics & blue = PCLL Pre-requisites*)

2020-2021	2021-2022	PCLL (2022-2023)
<i>Legal System and Legal Research</i>	<i>Land Law I & Land Law II</i>	
<i>Contract I & Contract II</i>	<i>Equity & Trust I & II</i>	
<i>Tort I & Tort II</i>	Dissertation / Clinical legal education / International mooting competition	
<i>Criminal Law I & II</i>	<i>*JD students might take the remaining 3 PCLL Pre-requisites as electives.</i>	
<i>Constitutional law</i>		
<i>Commercial Law</i>		
Administrative law		

Compulsory Law subjects taken by 2023 Trainee candidates – Undergraduate programmes (*italics & blue = PCLL Pre-requisites*)

Year	LLB (admitted in 2018-2019)	BBA(Law) & LLB (admitted in 2017-2018)	BSS(GL) & LLB (admitted in 2017-2018)	BA (LS) & LLB (admitted in 2017-2018)
2017-2018		<i>Legal System</i>	<i>Legal System</i>	<i>Legal System</i>
		Law & Society	Law & Society	Law & Society
		<i>Contract I & II</i>	<i>Contract I & II</i>	<i>Contract I & II</i>
		Legal Research & Writing I	Legal Research & Writing I	Legal Research & Writing I
2018-2019	<i>Legal System</i>	<i>Tort I & Tort II</i>	Administrative law	Administrative law
	Law & Society	Legal Research & Writing II	<i>Constitutional law</i>	<i>Constitutional law</i>
	<i>Contract I & II</i>		<i>Tort I & Tort II</i>	<i>Tort I & Tort II</i>
	Legal Research & Writing I		Legal Research & Writing II	Legal Research & Writing II
2019-2020	<i>Constitutional law</i>	Administrative law	<i>Criminal Law I & II</i>	<i>Criminal Law I & II</i>
	<i>Criminal Law I & II</i>	<i>Business Associations</i>	<i>Land Law I & II</i>	Intro to Chinese Law
	<i>Land Law I & II</i>	<i>Commercial Law</i>		<i>Land Law I & II</i>
	<i>Tort I & Tort II</i>	<i>Constitutional law</i>		
	Legal Research & Writing II			
	Administrative law	<i>Criminal Law I & II</i>	<i>Business Associations</i>	<i>Business Associations</i>
2020-2022	<i>Business Associations</i>	<i>Equity & Trusts I & II</i>	<i>Commercial Law</i>	<i>Commercial Law</i>
	<i>Commercial Law</i>	Intro to Chinese Law	<i>Equity & Trusts I & II</i>	<i>Equity & Trusts I & II</i>
	<i>Equity & Trusts I & II</i>	Intro to Legal Theory	Intro to Chinese Law	Intro to Legal Theory
	Intro to Chinese Law	<i>Land Law I & II</i>	Intro to Legal Theory	Mooting & dispute resolution
	Intro to Legal Theory	Mooting & dispute resolution	Mooting & dispute resolution	
	Mooting & dispute resolution			
2022-2023	PCLL			

**Explanation of the Honours Classification System
for the Bachelor of Laws Degree and Juris Doctor Degree at the Faculty of Law,
The University of Hong Kong**

1. The degrees of Bachelor of Laws and Juris Doctor shall be awarded in five divisions in accordance with the degree regulations:

First Class Honours
Second Class Honours Division One
Second Class Honours Division Two
Third Class Honours
Pass

2. The classification of honours shall be determined by the Board of Examiners for the degree in accordance with the following Graduation Grade Point Average (GGPA) scores, with all courses taken (including failed courses) carrying weightings which are proportionate to their credit values:

Class of honours	GGPA range
First Class Honours	3.60 – 4.30
Second Class Honours	(2.40 – 3.59)
<i>Division One</i>	<i>3.00 – 3.59</i>
<i>Division Two</i>	<i>2.40 – 2.99</i>
Third Class Honours	1.70 – 2.39
Pass	1.00 – 1.69

3. Examination scripts and other assessable work for each course are marked in accordance with the following grading scale:

Mark		Grade	Grade point
90+)	Outstanding	A+	4.3
85-89)	Excellent	A	4.0
80-84)	Borderline Excellent	A-	3.7
76-79)	Very Good	B+	3.3
73-75)	Good (Average Competent Answer)	B	3.0
70-72)	Borderline Good	B-	2.7
66-69)	Very Satisfactory	C+	2.3
63-65)	Satisfactory	C	2.0
60-62)	Borderline Satisfactory	C-	1.7
55-59)	Pass	D+	1.3
50-54)	Borderline Pass	D	1.0
0-49)	Fail	F	0

Remarks:

LLB The mooted course which fulfills the capstone requirement of the programme shall be graded on pass/fail basis. An annotation "P" shall be recorded on the transcript for the mooted course which shall not be counted in the calculation of GGPA.

JD The following courses shall be graded on pass/fail basis: Legal system and legal research, Clinical legal education, and International mooted competition. An annotation "P" shall be recorded on the transcript for the mooted course which shall not be counted in the calculation of GGPA.

4. Honours classification may not be determined solely on the basis of a candidate's GGPA and the Board of Examiners for the degree may, at its absolute discretion and with justification, award a higher class of honours to a candidate deemed to have demonstrated meritorious

academic achievement but whose GGPA falls below the range stipulated in (2) above of the higher classification by not more than 0.1 Grade Point.

5. [Applicable to integrated double degree programmes only]
As approved by the Senate in June 2013, separate honours for the integrated double degree programmes are determined and awarded in accordance with the Regulation UG9 on the basis that among 300 credits of double degree programme requirements, 240 credits are counted towards each degree, including double-counting of relevant credits from either degree. Students graduating from double degree programmes therefore will receive 2 different GGPA and/or honours from each of the degree awarded from the double degree programme.
6. Subsequent to the switch from face-to-face to online teaching and learning across second semester of academic year 2019-20 and first semester of academic year 2020-21, HKU had given students the flexibility to opt for pass/fail grading for their enrolled courses within these 2 semesters at HKU. Courses that are graded under pass/fail grading will be recorded as "P" on the transcript, with no impact on the GPA calculation.

A '50% rule' will be employed for awarding a degree with honours to a student, which mandates that at least half of the credits of a degree curriculum should be letter-graded. This means that a student taking a programme requiring 240 credits for graduation will normally be required to have at least 120 letter-graded credits. A student with fewer than half the total credits letter-graded will normally be awarded a pass degree with no honours classification.

7. Class Ranking

In addition to the percentage distribution, it would also be useful to assess students on the basis of their rankings in class in individual years as well as on an overall basis of four years of study.

Upon a student's request, the Department of Law will issue an "Official Certification of Ranking" showing student's class ranking among his/her cohort in a particular examination year. If a student is a final year student, he/she may also request for his/her overall ranking in the degree in addition to his/her year ranking. This document reflects student's performance in the May examination only, and does not take into account the results of the supplementary examinations in August. Information on a graduate's overall ranking usually provides a fuller picture of his/her overall competence.

Employers may like to note, however, that the profile of core and elective subjects varies significantly in each year of the LLB and JD programmes, and marking practices in electives also vary. These needs to be borne in mind in drawing any comparison between candidates based on their year ranking where there is a great proportion of elective subjects. We advise employers to also seek information on a graduate's overall ranking to obtain a fuller picture of his/her overall competence.

Our PCLL Programme

Programme Structure (2020-21)

First Semester	Second Semester		
Compulsory Core Practice Areas	Compulsory Core & Elective Practice Areas <i>[Electives subject to minimum enrolment]</i>		
	Compulsory Core: Professional Practice and Management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Civil Litigation ➤ Criminal Litigation ➤ Corporate & Commercial Transactions ➤ Property Transactions I 	Litigation-specific	Transactional-specific	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commercial Dispute Resolution ➤ Matrimonial Practice and Procedure ➤ Personal Injury Litigation ➤ Property Litigation ➤ Employment Law and Practice ➤ Trial Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drafting Commercial Agreements ➤ Listed Companies ➤ Property Transactions II ➤ Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning ➤ China Practice 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Chinese in Legal Practice 		
First Semester	Second Semester		
Skills			
Problem solving Document analysis Issue identification Legal research			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research memo writing ➤ Advice writing ➤ Pleadings drafting ➤ Affidavit drafting ➤ Interviewing ➤ Conferencing ➤ Advocacy (non-trial) ➤ File and case management 	Litigation-specific	Transactional-specific	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pleadings drafting ➤ Affidavit drafting ➤ Opinion writing ➤ Advocacy (non-trial and trial) ➤ Interviewing/ Conferencing ➤ Negotiation/ Mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Document drafting ➤ Letter writing ➤ Interviewing ➤ Negotiation / Mediation 	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>* In each practice area, student will carry out practical exercises involving the use of different skills sets relevant to the context. Hypothetical transactions or case files adopted from real-life cases form the basis on which skills are being learnt and practiced.</i></p>		

FAQ about our PCLL Programme

Is it difficult to gain entry to the HKU PCLL?

Yes, but then it is difficult to gain entry to all the three PCLL courses because every year each institution receives more than twice as many applications as there are places. We tend to receive strong applications but that means your trainees will be studying among the best legal minds at one of the best institutions. HKU is ranked within the top 30 universities in the world and the law school was 19th in the 2018 international QS rankings.

Is it true that the standard of entry is high?

The legal profession has set a benchmark for admission to the PCLL of a “high 2.2” degree and all three law schools have been following that benchmark. Our focus in admissions is on academic merit and in this regard, we look primarily at an applicant’s All Law Average (the average mark of all Law subjects studied over the entirety of an applicant’s qualifying law degree) in light of relevant grading practice rather than just by the class of his or her degree. This means that applicants are treated equally, with their marks compared, as much as practicable, on a like-for-like basis. In past years, applicants with a 2.2 degree can still be offered a place on the PCLL if their marks are sufficiently competitive. We also hold a limited number of interviews for the last 10-15 places on the part-time programme for those applicants whose marks are not sufficiently competitive but who are able to demonstrate genuine legal working experience. Such legal working experience must be of at least 2 years in total duration, involve the use of legal skills such as research, drafting and advising clients and does not include internships or mini-pupillages.

Are non-HKU applicants disadvantaged in gaining entry?

No. HKU graduates have to compete for admission with overseas and other applicants for places.

Is it necessary to make HKU my first choice?

We strongly advise your trainees to put HKU as your first choice because the selection exercise is so competitive. We have agreed with the other two law schools that each of us will only consider applicants in the first instance who have put us as first choice. We will only consider applicants listing us as second or third choice in the event that not all places are filled by first choice applicants.

When will an applicant know the outcome of his or her application?

We will make conditional offers as early as possible and throughout the period from April to August (and perhaps even earlier). The sooner an applicant sends in the necessary application with supporting documentation, the earlier we can consider it. If an applicant fails to obtain the grades specified in the conditional offer, it is still possible that a place may be offered to them, however, this will depend on how their grades compare to those of applicants who have not yet been offered a place.

Will a master’s degree help?

This is of marginal relevance. Academic results in an applicant’s qualifying law degree are the primary consideration. Only in borderline cases or when the academic merits of applicants are similar will we take into account other factors, which include, for example, the results of a relevant LLM degree and genuine legal work experience.

Must an applicant have IELTS or will another English qualification do?

An applicant must have a recent pass at the appropriate level in the International English Language Test (IELTS) by the relevant deadline in August. We can make offers earlier conditional upon this being attained. The Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training does not allow the result in any other examination in English such as TOEFL.

Is the PCLL at HKU more theoretical than others?

We don't like to make comparisons but we can say that our course is very practical and has received praise from the legal profession. Our teaching materials are based on case studies and case files and are vetted and approved by our external examiners who are practitioners. Nearly all our teachers have experience as lawyers and many of them retain their practice at the Bar or as solicitors. We have lectures and classes led by current practitioners. Almost all our part-time teachers are working lawyers. Our method of teaching concentrates upon practical exercises carried out by students under supervision. The feedback from former students is that they find those materials useful when they start traineeship (or pupillage) and are grateful for the help they received.

How does your part-time programme compare to your full-time one?

We are currently the only PCLL provider to offer a part-time course. Our part-time PCLL course content is identical to our full-time programme and we apply the same standards to both programmes. The only real difference is that the part-time PCLL is taught over two years.

In previous years, PCLL students used to be able to obtain a "Credit", however, this no longer appears to be an option on the transcript. Why is this?

This is the result of a change in University policy towards the grade descriptors for Taught Postgraduate programmes that was implemented in the academic year 2016-17. Graduating PCLL students are now only awarded either a Distinction or a Pass.

How many students obtain a Distinction on the PCLL each year?

According to our Regulations, each year, we can award a Distinction to not more than 10% of the graduating class. This includes both full-time and part-time students.

Should the law firms require students to take any particular electives?

This is a matter for you entirely. Some law firms with a litigation focused practice, may consider it helpful for their trainees to take more litigation specific electives. Other law firms may allow their trainees to choose their electives themselves. The only requirement when it comes to the taking of electives is that for those students wishing to go to the Bar, they must take Trial Advocacy and one other litigation specific elective. Timetabling constraints may, however, prevent the taking of certain combinations of electives.

Will there be any changes to the curriculum of the PCLL moving forward?

Our ability to offer certain electives may depend on the number of students choosing that particular elective. In 2021, Civil Procedure and Criminal Procedure will be moved back to the PCLL from the LLB programme and taught alongside existing courses. This means that from 2021, LLB Civil Procedure and Criminal Procedure will no longer be PCLL pre-requisites.

Useful links

LLB & double degrees <https://www.law.hku.hk/prospective-students/ug-introduction/>

https://www.law.hku.hk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UGProspectus_2021-22.pdf

JD <https://jd.law.hku.hk/>

PCLL <https://www.ple.hku.hk/>

Careers Resource Centre <https://career.law.hku.hk/>

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