



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY LEEDS LAW SCHOOL

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – LLM Legal Practice, Postgraduate Diploma Legal Practice and MLaw: Law & Legal Practice (Exempting)

What will I study?

You will study LPC Stage 1 and LPC Stage 2. These two stages comprise 16 modules: 13 modules in Stage 1 and three modules in Stage 2. If you are a LLM student, you will also study an Independent Legal Research Project module which is assessed by a 12,000 word dissertation.

What is included in LPC Stage 1?

Stage 1 comprises the following modules which are compulsory:

Core practice areas:

- Business Law and Practice (PT Yr1)
- Property Law and Practice (PT Yr1)
- Litigation (Civil and Criminal) (PT Yr2)

Course skills:

- Practical Legal Research (PT Yr1)
- Writing (PT Yr1)
- Drafting (PT Yr1)
- Interviewing and Advising (PT Yr1)
- Advocacy (PT Yr2)

Other core areas:

- Wills and Administration of Estates (PT Yr1)
- Taxation (PT Yr1)
- Professional Conduct and Regulation (PT Yr1 and PT Yr2)
- Solicitors Accounts (PT Yr1)

What is included in LPC Stage 2?

Stage 2 comprises three modules and you may choose three from the following eight modules (PT: 1 elective in Year 1, two electives in Year 2):

- Commercial Law
- Commercial Leases
- Commercial Dispute Resolution
- Employment Law
- Family Law
- Mental Health Law (unlikely to run in 2023-24)
- Private Acquisitions
- Personal Injury Litigation

It is not guaranteed that all Stage 2 modules will run as this will depend on staff resources and how many students choose a particular module. In addition a few Stage 2 modules may be delivered online only if there are not enough students to run an on campus teaching group as well as an online teaching group.

With the exception of the Research Project module, all LPC students study together, following either the full-time timetable or the part-time timetable, and take the same assessments.

How will the LPC differ from my undergraduate course?

The LPC is a postgraduate professional course designed to prepare you for Day 1 of your training contract. You will need to adopt a different learning style for the LPC. There are no lectures on the LPC and there is an emphasis on independent study. The course is a challenging course, particularly in terms of the volume of work, the intensity of delivery, the number of modules and the number of assessments.

The course is delivered via interactive three hour workshops for which you **must** prepare. Workshops are not recorded. The average preparation time is 2-4 hours per workshop. Workshops are run on the assumption that students have completed their preparation so if you fail to prepare you will be making life more difficult for yourself than it needs to be. It will affect your engagement in workshops and you will not benefit from the teaching in the way that prepared students will. The more you engage in the workshops the more likely you are to succeed on the course.

The LPC is a very practical course. It is not testing your ability to regurgitate legal knowledge. It is testing your ability to **apply** your legal knowledge to a factual scenario. Please therefore aim to **understand** your preparation before attending workshops and seek to deepen that understanding by asking questions and fully engaging in workshops.

Workshops are not free-standing. They often build on work covered in previous workshops and so it is important that you keep up to avoid the risk of falling behind. Workshops move quickly and due to the intensity of the course there is no time for areas to be revisited. It is imperative to be organised and keep on top of your preparation and your notes. This is very different from an undergraduate course. There is too much content to learn and comprehend the week before an exam! Not least because you have a large number of assessments, some of which are scheduled in close succession whilst others take place alongside the teaching. On the LPC you will sit a total of 12 time-constrained written examinations, two oral examinations and three assignments.

As the LPC is a professional course there is a strong emphasis on professionalism. You are therefore required to conduct yourself professionally at all times, including at workshops and in email correspondence.

When does the course begin?

If you are a full-time student, your course begins on Monday 18 September 2023 at 9.00am and you will be required to attend up to six workshops, each of three hours, per week. Workshops are scheduled 9.00-12.00 and 13.00-16.00.

If you are a part-time student, your course begins on Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 17.30 and you will be required to attend two workshops, each of three hours, per week (usually Tuesdays and Thursdays) from 17.30-20.30. Please note that during the seven-week Stage 2 elective period (late winter 2023/ spring 2024), you will continue to have up to two workshops per week but to accommodate choices, workshops are spread across Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays evenings.

What is expected from me on the course?

You are expected to take responsibility for your learning and to engage fully in the course. As a minimum you must attend all workshops; engage with learning resources; participate in all learning activities; and submit all assessments as stipulated in your module and course information, meeting all deadlines required of you. If you are attending workshops online using MS Teams you **must** have a working camera and microphone. Your camera **must** always be switched on during workshops.

Unsatisfactory academic engagement, such as poor/late attendance and/or lack of engagement, will trigger certain actions and may ultimately lead to your withdrawal from the course or not being permitted to undertake assessments. It is, however, understood that there may be good reason why you cannot attend a workshop or engage in your studies for a short time so please contact your Academic Advisor/Course Director as there is a range of support to help you to re-engage when a problem is identified.

Is attendance at workshops compulsory?

Attendance and punctuality at workshops are compulsory. This is prescribed by the SRA. If you are unable to attend a workshop, due to illness or some other good reason, you must email the Module Tutor and the Course Administrator (LPC@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) to inform them and explain the reason for your absence. It is your responsibility to ensure that you catch up on any work that you miss.

What if I experience personal difficulties which affect my attendance at workshop?

If you experience personal difficulties which affect your attendance at workshops, please contact your Academic Advisor/Course Director to discuss your options. One option might be for you to suspend your studies and to re-join the course at the same point the following academic year. It is important to take up this option as soon as possible and before you miss a number of workshops. That's because you'll only be allowed to re-join the course 12 months from the date of suspension of your studies; not 12 months from when you last attended a workshop.

As a full-time student will I be able to work part time?

Our experience is that it is best to treat the full-time LPC as if it were a full-time job, ensuring that you can commit the necessary hours to your reading, preparation, attendance of all workshops and follow-up. Whilst it may be possible to balance this with some part time work, the advice is to limit the number of hours. Full-time students who do not commit fully to the course tend not to succeed or, if they do, their assessment results may not be as good as they might have been.

The recruitment market for trainee solicitors is fiercely competitive so it is in your interests to do as well as you can on the course. Please therefore give serious consideration to how

much paid part-time work you will be able to do on top of this full-time intensive professional course. You may have to work for financial reasons in which case it may be that the two-year part-time course would be better suited to you.

What books will I have to buy for the LPC?

You will be given free access to the digital LPC manuals published by Oxford University Press (OUP) and made available to you via the Oxford Learning Link. If a module uses a manual not published by OUP you will be given a free hard copy of that textbook.

How will I be assessed on the LPC?

There is a varied diet of assessments on the LPC including two oral examinations, 12 time-constrained open book examinations and three assignments. Full details of how modules are assessed are set out in their respective MyBeckett modules (MyBeckett is the University's virtual learning environment).

When will the assessments take place?

The assessments take place at different times throughout the academic year. Please refer to the Module Handbooks and Course Assessment Timetable for further information. To give you a flavour of the intensity of the course, please see below for a typical assessment programme for full-time students:

- **October:** Practical Legal Research (assignment: two weeks to complete)
- **November:**
 - Wills and Administration of Estates (a 1 hour exam)
 - Interviewing and Advising (time constrained oral examination)
 - Writing (assignment: two weeks to complete)
 - Practical Legal Research (assignment: two weeks to complete)
- **January:** Advocacy (oral examination)
- **February:**
 - Civil and Criminal Litigation (two written examination papers lasting 5 hours)
 - Professional Conduct & Regulation (one 2 hour written examination paper)
 - Drafting (assignment: two weeks to complete)
 - Solicitors Accounts (one 2 hour written examination paper)
 - Property Law and Practice (two written examination papers lasting 3 hours)
 - Business Law and Practice (two written examination papers lasting 4 hours)
- **May:** elective assessments x 3 (one 3 hour written examination paper per elective)
- **October:** Independent Legal Research Project (12,000 words) – for LLM students only

Will examinations take place on campus or online?

Regardless of which LPC you're studying you will have the choice of sitting the LPC oral and written examinations either online or on campus. MS Teams is used for oral exams whilst Inespera exam software is used for written examinations. The latter will be invigilated remotely ie a video and audio recording will be made during your exam. If you elect to sit exams online:

1. You will need to have a computer, internet connection, microphone and working webcam.

2. You will receive detailed information about the approach to online exams, including instructions for the exam software that you **must download**. In addition, there will then be a **mandatory test** that you **must** take to ensure you are able to access and use the necessary exam software.
3. If you do not take the mandatory test you will have to take your assessments on campus.

What academic regulations apply to the LPC?

Our Legal Practice Courses have their own assessment regulations which differ from those of the University. These deal with attendance, assessments, resits, mitigation, extensions, calculation of awards etc and are to be found in the Appendix to the Course Handbook on the MyBeckett course page.

Fit to sit policy

Please note that by undertaking an assessment you are declaring that you are fit to sit.

What if I am not fit to sit an assessment?

If you have extenuating circumstances and the assessment is a piece of coursework (written assignment) e.g. Drafting, Writing or Practical Legal Research, you may apply for an extension of the submission deadline. If successful, you will be given an extension of either five or 10 working days.

Alternatively, you may apply for a deferral of your assessment due to your extenuating circumstances. Any request for a mitigation must be supported by evidence and the request must be made no later than five working days of the date of assessment. Requests for mitigation are considered by the Mitigation Panel which meets in April, July and November on the morning of the Joint Module and Award Boards. Please refer to the Course Calendar for further details.

What if I fall ill during an assessment?

You may apply for mitigation supported by evidence. Your paper won't be marked and you won't be entitled to feedback (unless your application for mitigation is rejected)

What is the pass mark for a LPC assessment?

The pass mark for the LPC assessments is 50% unless it is one of the five Skills assessments. The latter don't have numerical marks. Students are assessed either as Competent or Not Competent.

How many attempts at an assessment may I have?

You have three attempts to pass each module assessment.

What if I pass one component of an assessment but not the other?

For example, if you pass the Litigation Paper 1 (Criminal Litigation) but don't pass the Litigation Paper 2 (Civil Litigation) and your mark overall for Litigation is below 50% you will need to resit **both** Litigation papers. You will not be able to retain the mark you attained for Paper 1 (Criminal Litigation).

Will I have to pay to resit an assessment?

Unlike many other LPC providers we don't charge students to resit an assessment. Please note that whilst some support is given to resitting students, it's not possible for you to attend workshops again. You may however pay again to re-attend provided the workshop group isn't already at full capacity.

How many reassessments take place in an academic year?

Each module has two assessment opportunities in each academic year. Please refer to the Course Assessment Timetable for further details.

If I don't pass an assessment, must I resit it at the next assessment opportunity?

No, you aren't necessarily required to resit an assessment at the next assessment opportunity. The Board of Examiners will set a deadline by which you must take a second or third attempt at an assessment. This will be made available to you via Results Online so please refer to this and make a careful note of your deadlines.

If you don't take an assessment by the given deadline that will be treated as a failed sit unless you make a successful application for mitigation. If you have a number of resit assessments, it is recommended that you discuss with your Academic Advisor how best to approach these and when to resit these. For example, it is usually advisable to stagger resits rather than taking them all in the same assessment period. Please note that may mean that your refer assessment(s) will fall in the next academic year.

What if I don't pass an assessment at a third attempt?

The consequences are as follows:

- You will automatically fail the academic award (i.e.the LLM Legal Practice, or the Postgraduate Diploma Legal Practice or the MLaw Law & Legal Practice (Exempting). **NB MLaw Law & Legal Practice (Exempting) students will, however, be able to graduate with a contained award ie the LLB certificate.**
- If you fail any Stage 1 module three times you will automatically fail all of Stage 1. You may study Stage 1 again but this will be from scratch as the SRA insist that no credit is given for any Stage 1 modules previously passed.
- If you fail any Stage 2 module three times you will automatically fail that elective but you can still complete Stage 2 of the LPC by re-enrolling on the failed elective or a different elective. You would have to pay for that module.

Please note that you must complete both LPC Stages 1 and 2 within five years from the date of the first assessment taken.

Upon my successful completion of the course what qualifications will I attain?

You will be awarded the professional qualification of the LPC as well as an academic qualification (either the LLM Legal Practice, Postgraduate Diploma Legal Practice or the MLaw Law & Legal Practice (Exempting)).

How is the LPC graded?

There are three possible awards on each of the LPCs: Pass, Commendation and Distinction. They will be awarded as follows:

Pass will be awarded when a student has passed all module assessments within three attempts.

Commendation will be awarded when a student has:

- achieved marks of $\geq 60\%$ in at least four of the following six subjects: PLP, BLP, Litigation and three electives; and
- achieved an average of $\geq 60\%$ in those six subjects; and
- must not have failed BLP, PLP, Litigation at first attempt; but permissible to have failed ONE of the following: Solicitor Accounts, a Course Skill or WAE or PCR but must pass at second attempt. **Distinction** will be awarded when a student has:
- achieved marks of $\geq 70\%$ in at least four of the following six subjects: PLP, BLP, Litigation and three electives; and
- achieved an average of $\geq 70\%$ in those six subjects; and
- passed every assessment at a first attempt.

When will I complete the LPC, the academic award and be able to graduate?

If you start the LPC in September 2023 and pass all assessments at the first attempt:

- You will complete both LPC Stages 1 and 2 in July 2024 if you are a full-time student and in July 2025 if you are a part-time student.
- If you are on the ML Law & Legal Practice (Exempting) you will complete the academic award in July 2024 and will be able to graduate in July 2024.
- If you are a full-time student on the PG Dip Legal Practice, you will complete the academic award in July 2024 and will be able to graduate in July 2024; part-time students will be able to graduate in July 2025.
- If you are a full-time student on the LLM Legal Practice, you will complete the academic award in November 2024 and will be able to graduate in July 2025; part-time students will be able to graduate in July 2026.

What advice would you give me to succeed on the LPC?

The best advice would be to use the acronym **PADLOCK** below as your key to success on the LPC:

P -Prepare for all workshops

A -Attend all workshops

D -Deepen your understanding by asking and answering questions in workshops

L -Look ahead to see upcoming workshops/assessments

O -Organise yourself eg use your calendar to carve out time for workshop prep/consolidation

C -Consolidate your notes after each workshop

K -Keep on top of your work

Below are **Top 10 Tips for Success** devised by a former LPC part-time student who worked as a paralegal in a Leeds law firm whilst studying:

1. **Preparation for workshops:** It's a different learning style to the one you've used previously in that the LPC doesn't have any lectures; instead there are three hour

interactive workshops. In order to get the most out of each workshop and be able to engage properly, you'll need to have at least a basic understanding of the contents for the workshop in hand. I use a diary to pick out days where I'm busy in order to identify the times where I would be able to study and find this to be the most effective way to keep organised.

2. **Organisation:** This is key. I used my diary to assign time for reading and prep tasks for workshops.
3. **Keep on top of your work:** The workshops move quickly and nothing will be revisited. It is easy to get behind with your notes, however, it is then extremely difficult to catch up with a week once you have missed it. There is too much content to learn the week before an exam.
4. **Attendance:** Linked to keeping up with your work is your attendance. As previously said, nothing is revisited in detail so it is vital that you attend every workshop. I only missed a very few workshops due to work commitments. Even if you're going to be late, it's better to attend most of the workshop than to not go at all.
5. **Be honest** - If you've had a stressful week at work, life got in the way or you have had a particularly heavy week in one of your other modules, let your tutors know. Whilst that is by no means a get out clause for being lazy, they're understanding if there are workshops where you have struggled to do all of the necessary pre-workshop tasks, provided there is a good reason, of course. It's better to be upfront than pretend you know what you're talking about.
6. **Consolidate** - I found that the best way to keep my notes exam ready was to consolidate what I did in each workshop every week. Quite often the materials contain mock exam questions and so clarifying my notes, adding the extra detail and re-writing my answers in a succinct way was a technique that helped me.
7. **Formatives** - Formatives are a great way to test what you know and identify areas for improvement. Make the most of this as it's the main time when you are able to get detailed feedback from tutors. They won't chase you for your formatives so it's on your head to complete it by the deadline.
8. **Feedback** - Tutors will give feedback in the workshops, however, they also offer feedback on formatives and oral feedback on your summative assessments. It's easy to contact them about this and again, it's on your head to do it. I always found going through my paper with my tutor helpful as I could often quickly identify where I had gone wrong and talk through what a better answer would have been.
9. **Electives** - Choose ones you enjoy. Whilst they're shorter than the core modules, you're more likely to want to engage with the materials and revise if it's something in which you're genuinely interested and/or you like to practise in the future.
10. **Enjoy yourself** - Whether you're completing the course full-time or working alongside your studies, try to enjoy yourself and the time you have with your course friends. I've made some great friends on the LPC. The year(s) will quickly fly and before you know it, it'll be over and your graduation will soon be upon you.

June 2023