

York Law School

Programme change proposals:

LLM in Law (Juris Doctor)

At York each degree programme has its own, tailored set of distinctive learning outcomes. These won't change, no matter what your location or mode of delivery, and our tutors are working hard to ensure your programmes and modules next year continue to inspire and motivate you.

Your health and safety is our number one priority and in light of the Covid-19 pandemic we have needed to make changes to some of your programmes of study for the coming academic year. This document summarises the changes that are proposed.

Programme(s)	LLM in Law (Juris Doctor) See programme details: https://www.york.ac.uk/study/postgraduate-taught/courses/llm-law-juris-doctor/
--------------	--

Summary of Overall Plans

Introduction

Our overall plans are based around achieving a balance between four main considerations :

- Ensuring that, so far as practicable, students on campus will be able to engage in regular, rewarding and stimulating learning activities with other students and tutors in classroom environments [“face-to-face” or “face-to-face” learning]
- Recognising the core role of problem-based learning (PBL) in underpinning interactive, student-led learning of the qualifying law degree subjects across all years of LLB programmes at York, and its similar role in underpinning the majority of programme learning outcomes.

- Government and university guidance on health and safety, including social distancing, means that teaching rooms have reduced capacity and overall available space for teaching - both large and small groups - is significantly lower. This means we shall have to provide some learning activities on an online basis for students on campus. Space and resource limitations have also meant we have had to make the decision to withdraw a small number of final year option modules (see Programme Structures box below).
Online learning activities will include: all large group lecture and plenary sessions, which will be recorded and available in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE); and also a number of subject modules. Where a subject module will be tutored on an online basis for students on campus, we have considered our capability to facilitate suitable student learning activities to enable the module learning outcomes to be achieved. That is, activities are such that they can be replicated or substituted online to provide an engaging and consistent student learning experience.
- We need to be able to offer online alternative versions of modules for any students unable to attend campus because of Covid-19 related issues.

Our plans and proposals for next year are based on the above considerations, which in turn are based on the best information we have available at the moment on health and safety issues, teaching space availability, student numbers and tutor availability. Our plans for face-to-face teaching for students on campus are therefore premised on what we hope to be able to offer, subject to final confirmation of the amount of available teaching space before the start of term: wherever we cannot provide planned face-to-face teaching on a specific module, we shall provide online, virtual learning (see below).

You will appreciate, given recent months, that local, national and international events could bring about changes in circumstances. Our hope, of course, is that these will result in changes for the better. In that event, we shall, of course, review all relevant factors to assess our ability to provide more face-to-face workshops for students on campus on some or all options, whilst continuing online workshops for students who cannot attend campus. In addition, within individual modules, circumstances may vary such that the module leader may vary the proposals below. Wherever possible, this would be to ensure the quality of learning experience we can provide you.

Online, virtual learning

From initial planning at programme level of core modules, and feedback from option module leaders, where learning takes place on an online, virtual basis, you will be enabled to meet module and programme learning outcomes through a combination of some or all of:

- Recorded lectures/plenaries (some will have options for online student engagement alongside the recordings)
- Live workshops or seminars facilitated by your tutor via Zoom (which will also be recorded for students who, for whatever reason, are unable to engage synchronously)
- Discussion boards or chat rooms
- Supplemental text and/or media resources
- Directed individual/small group preparatory activities
- Submission of student work with formative feedback

Plans for Year 1

Our proposed plans are set out below for Year 1 of the programme:

All lecture sessions for all modules will be recorded and made available in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). You will be given clear guidance as to when these become available and should be viewed. There may be follow-up online activities, e.g., posting and reviewing a discussion forum on topics from the plenaries.

Foundations modules

All PBL workshops in Foundations modules will be face-to-face in a student law firm, with a PBL tutor, for students on campus. This will mean that the majority of your workshop learning should be face-to-face.

For students who cannot attend campus, there will be live virtual PBL workshops in a student law firm, with a PBL tutor.

All students - whether or not on campus - will follow the same PBL processes on the same problem scenarios on a week by week basis, to enable them to meet required module learning outcomes.

Legal Skills

Workshops will be live, in a virtual, online format for all students, whether or not on campus. The module will run in Term 1. The module is based on simulated cases and transactions, with students acting for clients, as would be the case in practice.

Professionalism & Ethics

Workshops will be live, in a virtual, online format for all students, whether or not on campus. The module will run in Term 2.

Legal Concepts

Workshops will be live, in a virtual, online format for all students, whether or not on campus. The module will run in Term 2.

Assessments

There are very few supervised examinations on the LLB Senior Status. In Year 1, there are two, which would usually take place in Term 3 in the Foundations 2 module. Our plan is that these will be revised so that they can be taken on an online basis. The specific format of the papers will be similar but additional time will be provided to complete them.

We assess student contribution in PBL workshops in Year 1, and also in Legal Skills and Legal Concepts. We propose to maintain this assessment for PBL only: not in the other modules.

We are also reviewing module assessment formats which might cause issues around social distancing, e.g. presentations, and, should we be unable to carry out a suitable assessment within guidelines, will either vary the format or cancel that element of a module assessment and re-weight the remaining elements.

