

Module Specification

Module Summary Information

1	Module Title	Dissertation
2	Module Credits	40
3	Module Level	7
4	Module Code	LAW714

5	Module Overview
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The aim of this module is to provide a framework for you to undertake a piece of disciplinary-relevant research at Masters level the output of which may be either a placement, integrated project or dissertation. This is founded upon Birmingham City University's teaching and learning philosophy which integrates theory into practice. The module allows you to conduct a study integrating the principles, tools and methods from your programme in particular the study of research paradigms and development of achievable methodologies in the Advanced Legal Research Methods module.

The format for the study whether it be a placement, live project or dissertation will vary depending on which one you choose, however it must relate to the specific programme that you are studying. Delivery of the module will vary depending on the choice of project you make. You will be assigned to an academic who will have oversight of your project and there will be a requirement for you to undertake significant preparation outside of the face-to-face contact with your tutor. Whilst you will have already successfully completed training for Advanced Legal Research Methods your tutor will discuss with you the methods you have chosen for your study in addition to guiding you on strategy implementation for your project.

Dissertation

Conducting a dissertation allows you to engage in the rigorous study of a clearly defined legal topic or issue which may be in a legal practice context where appropriate. You will be required to write academically to a level of critical scholarship illustrating critical selection, categorisation and reflection. Studying a dissertation allows you to develop a higher level of knowledge and critical awareness through self-directed learning and autonomous enquiry. You will assess and reconcile complex legal issues or issues relevant to legal practice and present them in an academic and authoritative format.

You will have individual meetings with your allocated supervisor designed for you to discuss your progress, receive oral or written feedback on your research and performance in satisfying your research objective. The first of these will discuss the overall schedule of work for the dissertation. You will be required to do significant research outside of these meetings as well as undertake any preparatory work requested by your supervisor.

Live Project

This has to adhere to the framework of ethical approval applied within the School of Law and will involve working alongside researchers within the School of Law. Conducting a project requires you to possess a high degree of professionalism, the ability to manage the supervisory relationship and be able to collaborate with other stakeholders. Completion of the project allows you to specialise in a chosen field or area related to your legal study that shows critical knowledge and the application of research but also the demonstration of an outcome (result of the project).

Following negotiation of your topic for the live project which includes specific topics such as working with other people and demonstrating professionalism (not limited to these), you will be required to liaise with your project coordinator at three specific stages: start, middle and end.

These contact hours are over and above any requirements you will have to meet with parties that you are collaborating with on the project.

Placement

This option allows you to develop practical and academic skills by undertaking a placement or internship of work in a field allied to your programme. You will have the opportunity to resolve complex problems involving law or legal practice in a logical and professional manner as well as experience the relationship between the substantive and practical aspect of law in society. Through the application of learned skills, such as research, project planning and demonstration of professionalism you will be able to resolve practical problems and where possible, to devise remedial strategies. You will also develop confidence through direct contact with professionals in the field of your study.

You will have a one-to-one meeting with your assigned placement supervisor who will then discuss with you the schedule of the upcoming placement. You will have three further meetings with your supervisor as the placement progresses and a post-placement meeting at the end. For the duration of the placement you are encouraged to keep regular contact with your supervisor.

6	Indicative Content
<p>Semester 3 Week 1 Preparation for Placement/live project/conducting independent research.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 2 Individual meeting with dissertation supervisor/project coordinator/placement supervisor to discuss design of study and schedule of work.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 3 Conduct research for dissertation/work on live project/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 4 Conduct research for dissertation/work on live project/undertake placement</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 5 Conduct research for dissertation/work on live project/undertake placement</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 6 First meeting with dissertation supervisor/project coordinator /placement supervisor or visit Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 7 Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 8 Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 9 Second meeting with dissertation supervisor/ project coordinator/placement supervisor or visit Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 10 Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p> <p>Semester 3 Week 11 Third meeting with dissertation supervisor/ project coordinator/ placement supervisor or visit Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.</p>	

Semester 3 Week 12

Conduct research for dissertation/ work on live project work/undertake placement.

Semester 3 Week 13

Submission of Dissertation/live project/placement report.

Semester 3 Week 14

Reflection online webinar for all students on module.

Semester 3 Week 15

Post placement/live project meeting with supervisor/coordinator.

7		Module Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:		
	1	Design and construct a disciplinary-relevant study that shows deep critical engagement.
	2	Undertake autonomous research and/or work experience making use of specialist literature and resources and systematically interpreting relevant data and information.
	3	Critically reflect on the work or study undertaken and present findings in an authoritative manner using appropriate referencing.
	4	Critically evaluate complex legal rules and the effectiveness of institutions and procedures relevant to the chosen study.

8				Module Assessment
Learning Outcome		Coursework	Exam	In-Person
1 – 4		X		

9		Breakdown Learning and Teaching Activities
Learning Activities	Hours	
Scheduled Learning (SL) includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, peer group learning, Graduate+, as specified in timetable	0	
Directed Learning (DL) includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning, as directed on VLE	15	
Private Study (PS) includes preparation for exams	385	
Total Study Hours:	400	