

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### KEY FACTS

Programme name	Bar Vocational Studies (Full-time and Part-time)
Award	LLM in Bar Vocational Studies (with specialism) Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies (with specialism) Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies
School	The City Law School
Department or equivalent	Professional Programmes
Programme code	LALMBVS01/LAPDBSS01/LAPDBVS01
Type of study	Full Time / Part time
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

### PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The City Law School offers a suite of three vocational training programmes for the Bar so that students can choose the mode of study and attendance which best suits their requirements.

The Bar Vocational Studies programme enables you to choose from three different routes depending on whether you simply wish to qualify as a Barrister (the Vocational Component), or whether you wish to enhance your employability and further develop the knowledge and professional skills you have acquired on the Vocational Component of the course by completing two elective modules within a specialist area of practice of your choice (the Specialist Practice Component). You may also wish to gain a full LLM award by completing a dissertation or a clinical legal education project (the Dissertation/Clinical Legal Education Component). If you decided to do the full LLM option comprising all three components, then you may be eligible for the government's Postgraduate Loan (subject to meeting the relevant personal conditions).

The programme can be undertaken full-time over one year or part-time over two years.

This programme offers you three possible award routes:

#### **1. The Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies (the “Vocational Component”)**

If you successfully complete the compulsory modules on the programme in Advocacy, Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing, Professional Ethics, Opinion Writing, Legal Research, Drafting and Conference Skills, which form the vocational components of training for the Bar you will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies (120 credits). This is the compulsory vocational qualification required to be eligible for Call to the Bar of England and Wales.

## **2. The Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies (with specialism)**

If, in addition to the Vocational Component, you successfully complete the Specialist Practice Component you will be awarded a PGDip in Bar Vocational Studies with the relevant specialist area of practice you selected named in the award (150 credits). For example, PGDip in Bar Vocational Studies (with specialism in Advanced Civil Practice). This also includes the qualification for Call to the Bar of England and Wales.

## **3. The LLM (with specialism)**

You may choose, in addition to the Vocational Component and the Specialist Practice Component, to complete an additional practice-focussed dissertation (30 credits) in the specialist practice area you selected for your electives or in one of the modules studied in the Vocational Component of the programme. Alternatively, you may choose a clinical legal education project (30 credits) as an alternative to the dissertation (please note that this option is only open to full-time students). This also includes the qualification for Call to the Bar of England and Wales. Successful completion of this component, along with the Vocational and Specialist Practice Components, would entitle you to the award of LLM (with specialism) (180 credits).

More detail about each of these components of the programme is set out below.

### **The Vocational Component**

The compulsory modules on this programme in Advocacy, Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing, Professional Ethics, Opinion Writing, Legal Research and Conference Skills aim to ensure that you have successfully demonstrated sufficient knowledge and understanding of the competencies set out in the Professional Statement for Barristers that are applicable to the vocational stage of training. You will find the latest version of the Professional Statement for Barristers on the BSB's website ([www.barstandardsboard.org.uk](http://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk)). The purpose of this part of the programme is to enable you, building on your previous studies of the law, to acquire and develop the skills, knowledge and values you will need in order to be called to the Bar of England and Wales.

The Vocational Component focuses on the legal and practical knowledge, skills and attributes and the professional and personal values and standards that a barrister must have on "day one" of practice. These competences have been defined in detail by the Bar Standards Board and are set out in the Professional Statement for Barristers. Successful completion of the compulsory modules will indicate that you have demonstrated these competences to the extent necessary to progress to pupillage or the work-based learning component of training for the Bar of England and Wales. Successful completion of the Vocational Component also enables students from overseas jurisdictions to indicate they have acquired the skills required for the commencement of pupillage at the Bar of England and Wales, thereby assisting them to undertake further training or practice in their home jurisdiction.

In keeping with its role in training students for the Bar, the Vocational Component concentrates on:

- (a) Advocacy training, to equip you for your work as an advocate at all levels of the courts and tribunals in England and Wales;
- (b) Advisory work, to equip you with the legal and interpersonal skills necessary for the purpose of providing legal advice to clients, both orally and in writing; and
- (c) Specialist drafting work, to equip you with the technical skills necessary to be able to draft a range of documents used in legal practice.

Barristers also need to be able to deal with a range of technical procedural and evidential issues in a court-room setting, where points often arise with very little warning. They need to be able to advise on the full range of dispute resolution processes and to act in accordance with the ethical standards laid down by the profession. On the Vocational Component therefore you will also have compulsory modules dealing with:

- (a) Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution;
- (b) Criminal Litigation, Sentencing & Evidence; and
- (c) Professional Ethics.

You will approach your studies from a range of different perspectives, undertaking legal work (including advocacy, advisory, drafting and theoretical work) in the context of civil and criminal cases on behalf of both claimants/applicants, defendants/respondents and for the prosecution and the defence to broaden your expertise and skills. You will evaluate critically current practice and legal developments across a range of civil and criminal subjects. You will also develop your ability to synthesise a range of legal, procedural, factual, evidential and ethical concepts and materials into a coherent case theory and strategy for conducting claims, disputes, defences and prosecutions on behalf of clients, as well as your ability to provide appropriate critiques of professional skills performances using objective criteria.

If you successfully complete the Vocational Component (only), you would be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies.

### **The Specialist Practice Component**

Legal practice has become increasingly specialised over the years, both nationally and internationally. The Professional Statement (paragraph 1.3) requires barristers to have knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relevant to their area(s) of practice. In addition to qualifying you for Call to the Bar of England and Wales, the Specialist Practice Component will enable you to develop a critical understanding of the law, procedure and real world insights in a specialist area of professional practice of your choice and to further develop the skills that a barrister must have within the context of that specialist area. You will do this by choosing to study two optional specialist modules, each of 15 credits, from a list of up to 10 specialist practice areas (each of which contain at least two elective modules), in addition to the Vocational Component, to gain your Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies with a named specialism

(150 credits). Please note that it may not always be possible to offer all of these specialist practice areas in any one year.

### **The Dissertation/Clinical Legal Education Component**

In addition to the Vocational Component and the Specialist Practice Component, you may want to further your academic study by undertaking a research-based dissertation module (30 credits) on a topic that is relevant to the specialist area of practice you have chosen for your electives or on a topic which you will study on the Vocational Component of the programme.

Alternatively, you will have the option of undertaking a clinical legal education project, and producing a related portfolio (30 credits). Please note that the clinical legal education project is open only to full-time students.

The Vocational Component, plus the Specialist Practice Component together with the Dissertation/Clinical Legal Education Component enable you to earn the same credit as a conventional Master's degree. Successful completion of it would earn you the award of LLM (with specialism) (180 credits).

The Dissertation provides you with an opportunity for critical reflection and innovative thought and allows you to demonstrate an ability to advance your legal knowledge and understanding in your chosen specialist area of practice through independent research and reflective learning. Alternatively, the clinical legal education project will allow you to undertake supervised clinical legal work in a practice related area, developing and demonstrating skills related to that practice.

The LLM route aims to enhance your ability to analyse, interpret and criticise substantive and adjectival law relevant to professional practice, and/or the skills required for professional legal practice. In particular, it will support you in:

- demonstrating initiative and personal responsibility in tackling and solving problems and in working autonomously in planning and implementing a task at a professional level;
- enhancing your knowledge and understanding of substantive law, procedural and evidential rules and developing the skills relevant to professional legal practice;
- developing an integrated, analytical and reflective approach to legal practice;
- developing professional attitudes, values and working methods;
- developing a critical awareness of current legal problems or issues at the forefront of legal practice;
- developing a conceptual and practical understanding of techniques of research and the analysis of complex information.

### **WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?**

On successful completion of the Vocational Component, you will be expected to achieve the competences at the relevant level described by the Bar Standards Board in the Professional Statement for Barristers as follows:

**Knowledge and understanding:**

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Reference in Professional Statement</b>
Evaluate and synthesise knowledge and understanding of the relevant key concepts and principles of public and private law and the principles of law and rules of procedure and practice specified by the Bar Standards Board.	1.2, 1.3
Critically apply the relevant (and up-to-date) legal principles and rules of procedure and practice to the matters you are dealing with.	1.3(a), (b), (c) and (d). 1.5(j)
Synthesise knowledge of the legal texts, journals, materials, documents and research tools relevant to the matters you are dealing with.	1.3(b)
Formulate advice for clients which demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of situations where alternative forms of dispute resolution may be appropriate to their given circumstances.	1.3(e)
Examine the range of organisations supporting the administration of justice and their respective roles.	1.4
Explain the implications for the conduct of the case and the additional responsibilities owned in circumstances where the client is publicly funded or otherwise not self-funded.	1.4(c)

**Skills**

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Reference in Professional Statement</b>
Critically analyse, assess and evaluate all relevant information and key issues and risks including the quality and reliability of information.	1.5, 1.5 (b), (e), and (g). 1.9(e). 1.10(a), 1.12 (f), 1.15(b)
Identify inconsistencies, ambiguities and gaps in information, and advise how these should be addressed and seek clarification of instructions using appropriate communication skills.	1.5(a), 1.5(f) and 1.9(f)
Effectively exercise appropriate numeracy skills and critically analyse financial and other statistical information.	1.5(c) and (d)
Accurately apply relevant legal principles to factual issues and use reliable sources of information to make effective judgments and devise the most appropriate solution taking into account the client's circumstances, needs, objectives, priorities and any constraints.	1.5 (g), (h) and (k).
Demonstrate sound reasoning for all decisions which is supported by relevant evidence, and be able to explain and justify your analysis and evaluation.	1.5(l), 1.5(m)

Provide clear, concise and accurate advice in writing (or orally) which addresses all relevant legal and factual issues and which takes into account the client's circumstances and objectives.	1.6, 1.6(a), 1.6(c)
Ensure that advice is informed by appropriate analysis, synthesis and evaluation and where appropriate identifies and evaluates the consequences of different options.	1.6(b)
Write with clarity, accuracy and precision, using correct and appropriate vocabulary, English grammar, spelling and punctuation.	1.8, 1.8(a) 1.9(h) and (i) 1.13(e)
Speak fluently and articulately, using correct and appropriate vocabulary and English grammar	1.8(b), 1.9(j)
Use appropriate listening and questioning techniques when obtaining information.	1.9(d)
Present arguments cogently and succinctly.	1.9(k).
Communicate effectively in all engagements with others using a range of skills and strategies (including adapting language and non-verbal communication) which responds appropriately to those from diverse backgrounds and which has regard to others' particular needs and sensitivities created by individual circumstances, vulnerabilities, objectives, priorities and constraints.	1.9, 1.9(a), (b), (c), (g) and (l). 1.6(d). 1.13(f). 3.3, 3.3(b),(c) and (d)
Demonstrate sound judgments in your work, and take responsibility for them.	1.10, 1.10(c)
Act independently so that your judgment is not influenced by external pressures.	1.10(b)
Ensure you are fully prepared in order to act in the best interests of the client and provide a competent standard of work and service to the client.	1.11, 1.11(a)
Accurately identify the legal and non-legal issues.	1.12(a)
Demonstrate effective research skills by using appropriate methods and resources (paper, electronic or other media and/or relevant experts), assessing the quality and relevance of all sources, and ensuring that legal sources are up-to-date.	1.12, 1.12(b), (c), (d) 1.5(i)
Interpret and evaluate the results of all research, and apply it to the issues identified in order to draw conclusions and present the results clearly and accurately.	1.12(e),(g) and (h)
Draft legally effective court and other legal documents which comply with appropriate formalities, address all relevant legal and factual issues, are clear, concise and accurate and make appropriate use of precedents.	1.13, 1.13(a), (b), (c) and (d)
Draft Skeleton arguments which present the relevant facts, law and arguments in a clear, concise and well-structured manner and which comply with all relevant Rules, Practice Directions and other relevant protocols.	1.14, 1,14(a) and (b)
Accurately apply to the matters you are dealing with the law and procedure relevant to advocacy.	1.15(a)
Critically evaluate strengths and weaknesses from different parties' perspectives and manage facts to support the argument or the position.	1.15(c), (d) and (e)

Demonstrate persuasive oral advocacy skills, by presenting a reasoned argument in a clear, logical, succinct and persuasive way and complying with all relevant formalities.	1.15,15(d), (f) and (h)
Use and cite legal authority appropriately.	1.15(g)
Evaluate the role of different types of witnesses and use appropriate techniques for witness handling, having particular regard to vulnerable witnesses.	1.15(i)
Listen and respond effectively to questions and opposing arguments and use appropriate listening and questioning techniques when obtaining information.	1.9(d), 1.15(j)
Deploy advocacy skills efficiently and effectively, in compliance with Core Duties, so far as possible, notwithstanding that you may be required to act at short notice or under other legitimate pressure.	1.15(k)

### **Values and Attitudes**

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Reference in Professional Statement</b>
Uphold the reputation of the Bar and observe your duty to the court in the administration of justice.	1.1 2.1(c)
Act ethically and consistently in accordance with regulatory requirements set down by the Bar Standards Board, including the current Code of Conduct (including the Core Duties and their interrelationship) and other applicable rules and regulations and the Professional Statement for Barristers.	1.1(a), 1.1(b) 1.16, 1.16(a) and (d). 2.1 (c) and (d). 2.2(a). 3.1(a) and (e).
Identify ethical issues and apply the Code of Conduct and other applicable rules and regulations, relevant guidance and advice in order to reach appropriate solutions.	1.16(b) and (c)
Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate conduct in court. Use the required dress, accepted forms of address, observe formalities of proceedings and follow established conventions and customs in each forum in which you represent clients.	1.17, 1.17(a)
Only accept work which you believe you are competent to undertake and recognise and operate within the limits of your competence, and explain clearly the limits of your competence and knowledge to relevant others and decline to act where the Code requires you to do this.	1.18. 1.18(a), (b), (d) and (e)
Act with the utmost integrity and independence at all times, in the interests of justice, representing clients with courage, perseverance and fearlessness.	2.1, 2.1(b)
Identify situations where your integrity and/or independence may be put at risk, including avoiding personal bias, maintaining independence from external pressures and Identifying potential conflicts of interest, and being prepared to withdraw from a case if appropriate.	2.1(a) and (b)
Take responsibility for your actions and decisions	2.1(e)

Be honest in your dealings with others, including about the limits of your knowledge, your experience, qualifications and professional status and ensure that any information you give is accurate, true, and not likely to mislead.	2.2, 2.2(b) and (c)
Apply the law on equality, diversity and discrimination, including being alert to the potential for unconscious bias, to situations that may arise in legal practice, and identify situations where the law has been breached.	2.3, 2.3(a), (b), (c) and (d) 3.3(a)
Critically consider the importance of adopting a reflective approach to your work, enabling you to identify errors of judgement, omissions and mistakes, and take appropriate action.	2.5, 2.5(a), (c)
Critically consider the importance of ensuring you practise with adaptability and flexibility, by being self-aware and self-directed, recognising and acting upon the continual need to maintain and develop your knowledge and skills and develop your competence and performance.	2.6, 2.6(a)
Reflect on and learn from your own and others performance and achievements and identify strengths and areas for development and take positive steps to address them, and take part in activities that maintain and develop your knowledge and skills.	2.6. 2.6(b), (c), (d) and (e)
Understand and exercise your duty to act in the best interests of the client, providing a competent standard of work and service to each client.	3.1,3.1(a))
Identify the client's best interests in accordance with the client's lawful instructions and, subject to para 3.1(c) of the Professional Statement, do not act contrary to the client's lawful instructions	3.1(b) and 3.1(d)
Recognise and evaluate any conflict between the client's best interests and your duty to the court, your obligation to act with honesty and integrity and to maintain your independence	3.1(c)
Demonstrate suitable professional practice, politeness and respect in communications and personal interactions with others, regardless of their differences, background or circumstances.	3.4, 3.4(a), (b)
Demonstrate practice that shows awareness of your additional responsibilities and professional duties under the Code of Conduct and other rules and regulations in cases involving litigants in person, including duties to the litigant in person, the court and your own client.	3.6, 3.6(b), (c) and (d)
Demonstrate understanding of the specific implications of being a self-employed and an employed barrister	4.1.1 and 4.1.2

**On successful completion of the Specialist Practice Component**, you will, in addition, be expected to be able to apply the above knowledge and understanding, skills and values and attitudes in the context of your chosen specialist area of practice. In addition, in some electives, you will be expected to be able to demonstrate effective negotiation skills by identifying as far as possible all parties' interests, objectives, and limits, formulating options to meet the client's objectives, responding to those of the other side and bringing the negotiation to a successful conclusion.



**On successful completion of the Dissertation/Clinical Legal Education Component you will, in addition, be expected to be able to:**

**Knowledge and Understanding:**

- examine and synthesise substantive law, procedural and evidential rules, and skills relevant to professional legal practice including critical awareness of topical and developing areas of law or practice.

**Skills and Attributes:**

- demonstrate planning for a research or scholarly project using appropriate research techniques;
- develop legal and professional research skills and be able to analyse complex information;
- critically evaluate current research, advanced scholarship and law relevant to your dissertation topic and/or clinical legal education project;
- undertake independent learning and demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility in tackling and solving problems;
- work autonomously in planning and implementing a task at a professional level;
- demonstrate originality in addressing problems or issues arising from the current state of the law and practice in the specialist area studied;
- demonstrate persuasive and effective oral and written skills (as appropriate) in the context of a specialist area.

**HOW WILL I LEARN?**

The Vocational Component

Face-to-face teaching takes place mainly in tutorials (normally 12 students) and small group classes (normally 6 students). You may also have some lectures in larger groups. There are also some one-to-one feedback sessions.

Small group classes are designed to support the skills and knowledge you will be developing.

- Knowledge subjects tend to be based around complex factual and authentic case studies or problem questions. You will work on these in advance of the class, which will then explore the issues raised and how you have applied the relevant principles. Classes also consider how to develop and construct arguments, organize material, how to assess what the court is likely to do, and how best to advise the client in the circumstances. For the knowledge subjects, we also provide you with an extensive bank of assessment-standard single best answer and multiple choice questions for self-assessment and consolidation and to assist you to prepare effectively for the examinations in these subjects.
- Skills classes tend to be based around authentic simulated case papers which raise issues similar to those you will encounter in junior practice. The emphasis is on the performance of typical tasks undertaken by members of the Bar. The case papers are designed to enable you to see how cases develop in practice. Just as happens in real life, you meet some of these cases at various points as

they progress through the stages of court proceedings. While legal research and a sound application of the law remain of crucial importance, the emphasis will also be on the practical application of the law to the facts and the drafting of concise legally and factually accurate documents, advising orally or in writing, or making an advocacy submission or conducting an examination-in-chief or cross-examination of a witness. In the class, you will get feedback on your work. You will be given guidance on how to give constructive comments on the performance of your peers, but the bulk of the feedback is given by your class tutors. They will be aiming to identify underlying issues in your performance, with guidance on how to improve, and you will be given opportunities to put the guidance into effect. In this way, you should find that you are able to make steady improvement as you progress through the programme.

Classes are supported by a range of materials, including a series of manuals which were written by senior members of staff and members of the practising Bar, and which are published by Oxford University Press. These manuals have been widely recognised as leading and innovative texts on teaching legal skills. These manuals, together with other supporting textbooks (which include relevant practitioner texts), are included in the course fees.

Each module is carefully structured and broken down into discrete learning units, with carefully designed online and accessible resources designed to give you as much flexibility as possible in relation to how you learn. These resources may include video, audio, graphical and text-based resources. They will enable you to master the basic elements of each topic or skill, test your knowledge and understanding and prepare effectively for classes. You will also have asynchronous online activities (making use of video, audio and other media) which are carefully designed to:

- provide general guidance on how to approach the different modules on the course;
- help you acquire and assimilate the necessary knowledge you need for the class work that will follow;
- assist you to prepare effectively for each class;
- build your skills and knowledge in an effective and incremental way in relation to each module;
- provide effective consolidation and revision after classes and at other strategic points in the programme;
- provide you with additional opportunities to practice skills and knowledge and gain feedback.

If you choose to study full-time, for the Vocational Component you will typically have around 10 hours of face-to-face teaching each week and asynchronous online activities of around 4 to 6 hours per week. You will also be expected to do about 25 hours of personal study each week, engaging in reading and research, online activities, writing opinions and drafts and preparing for classes. Most classes are timetabled between 9am and 6pm. There may also be some occasional complimentary extra-curricular evening sessions, usually between 6pm and 7pm, which are usually delivered by practitioners. You will have a regular study day with no classes each week, and we try to timetable classes to create a second study day if this is possible. Study leave, reading weeks, and holidays at Christmas and Easter are incorporated into the teaching programme.

If you choose to study part-time, the course will be taught over two years. In the first year you will complete the following modules: Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing, Professional Ethics, Conference Skills, Advocacy: Examination in Chief and Advocacy: Cross Examination. You will have approximately 4 hours of face to face teaching each week, plus about 10 hours of personal study.

In the second year you will complete the remaining modules in Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Advocacy: Submissions, Drafting, Opinion Writing and Legal Research. You will have approximately 6 hours face to face teaching each week, plus about 15 hours of personal study.

Teaching on the part-time course will take place on weekdays, usually between 9am and 6pm. You will normally be required to attend classes one day per week in year one and two days per week in year two.

The teaching period for the Vocational Component typically runs from September to April in the following year. During this time you will study and undertake assessment in the vocational modules.

The programme therefore:

- provides you with opportunities for learning by doing;
- requires you to play an active role in the course and to take responsibility for your own learning;
- requires you to reflect on your own learning;
- seeks to inculcate a professional approach to work and to develop your knowledge and application of the principles of professional ethics in all aspects of your work; and
- seeks to provide you with an informed view of a barrister's working life.

#### The Specialist Legal Practice Component

If you choose the PG Dip (with specialism) route, you will be required to complete two additional elective modules.

You will undertake the electives between April and June. During this period, you will have face-to-face classes of approximately 4 to 6 hours per week and asynchronous online activities of around 4 hours per week which are designed to assist you to gain the relevant knowledge for the classes and to prepare for them effectively. You will also be expected to do about 15 to 20 hours of private study per week researching, reading and preparing for these classes. The classes will be either tutorials (normally 12 students) and or small groups (approximately 6 students), depending on the subject.

If you are studying part-time you will undertake both your electives at the end of the second year. Please note that it is likely you will need to attend classes on two half days during this period and that it may not be possible accommodate preferred teaching days, due to the low numbers of students taking each subject.

Small group classes are designed to support the knowledge of the law that you will acquire and apply in the context of realistic and authentic case papers, raising issues

commonly encountered in practice. Although the electives will enable you to develop a critical understanding of the law and demonstrate high-quality legal research skills, the focus will be on developing, in the context of that specialist area of practice, the professional legal skills and competences that you gained in the vocational modules. You will work on the case papers in advance of the class, which will then explore the issues raised and how you have applied the relevant principles to those issues and you will be given feedback on your work

Each elective will be supported by a wide range of carefully designed online and accessible resources designed to give you as much flexibility as possible in relation to when, where and how you learn. These resources may include video, audio, graphical and text-based resources and they will enable you to master the main principles of substantive law and procedure, test your knowledge and understanding and assist you to prepare effectively for classes.

#### The Dissertation/Clinical Legal Work Component

If you choose the LLM route, in addition to the Vocational and Specialist Practice Components, you will be required to complete a practice-focussed dissertation or (for full-time students only) a clinical legal work project.

#### **The dissertation**

The dissertation module will support you further in achieving high standards in entering the legal profession. As is appropriate at this level, there is a strong emphasis on independent work in carrying out research, analysis and writing up.

If you choose the dissertation, you will need to do research and preparatory work on the dissertation alongside the taught part of the course. This will be an additional work requirement between September and April although most of the work will be undertaken between May and August. The subject of your dissertation will be drawn from a topic that you studied on the Vocational or Specialist Practice Components of the Programme. You will prepare for and attend a selection of workshops and lectures and two supervision sessions. You need to have strong research skills and have stamina and interest in your subject to persevere with what will be, at times, an intense workload.

You will receive one-to-one supervision on your dissertation. We provide you with a clear structure for supervision, and you will agree with your supervisor the timeline for planning, research, analysis and completion of your dissertation. You will be expected to submit your dissertation in September following the end of teaching. There is an emphasis on steady and sustained progress. Your supervisor will be able to give you feedback on proposals for the structure of your dissertation and at least one draft chapter.

If you are studying part-time, you will be expected to work on the dissertation across both years of the course and will have support to do so, and will submit it in the September following your second year of the course. You will have a third supervision session to support you across this period.

You are expected to use appropriate practitioner and specialist resources for research.

In undertaking this, you will also be able to make use of our excellent library support for guidance on developing your literature search and other aspects of research techniques. You will have full access to online research and other resources throughout the programme.

In addition to supervision, we will provide you with training in research and writing skills, and also online support, to assist you with research and analysis methods, structure for the dissertation, writing up the results of your research, referencing sources etc. Please note that empirical research will not be possible on the dissertation module.

**The Clinical Legal Education project (full-time students only)**

This option allows you to complete a portfolio relating to supervised Clinical Legal Education work. The core ingredients will be:

- you will undertake some work in an area of clinical legal education activity, which will include some elements of meeting, representing and/or advising clients;
- to support this activity, you will undertake appropriate training;
- you will carry out some legal research in relation to appropriate aspects of the activity you undertake;
- you will produce a portfolio summarising what you have done.

You will work in an area of Clinical Legal Education activity with which the City Law School has established links or is establishing links, as this will provide the best support for what you are doing. Some activities require completion of training and the passing of an assessment before they can be undertaken and spaces for this may be limited. Work for this module will be expected to take around 300 hours, which will be a combination of training, volunteering, supervision, court or tribunal visits and the writing of your portfolio report, although the proportion of time on each area may vary. Volunteering hours undertaken before registration for the module cannot count towards the work for this module.

Should you choose to take the Clinical Legal Education project, you will be required to undertake work on it during the taught element of the course. There may be a regular day-time commitment for all or part of the course. You may (for example) be representing clients at tribunals, taking witness statements, assisting at or giving advice in Law Centres. There will also be compulsory lectures and supervision sessions. This is a unique opportunity to develop clinical legal skills, and the aim is to develop skills that Chambers are looking for, but this must be met with commitment.

You will undertake some of the volunteering element of the work in the summer period after the taught part of the course finishes. You will also independently write a portfolio which includes an analytical report of the work undertaken and a reflective report which describes what you have learned from the process and this will also include independent research on the relevant area(s) of law.

The learning and teaching requirements will vary depending on the project you are undertaking but will include training through online resources and materials and the

support of a supervisor during your work and in relation to completion of your portfolio. You will be required to submit the portfolio in September.

## **WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?**

### The Vocational Component Assessments

The Vocational Component is assessed by 10 summative (final) assessments, each of which is designed to suit the skill or subject being assessed.

Eight of the assessments are set by The City Law School, with the papers being approved by an External Examiner appointed by the Bar Standards Board and The City Law School. These assessments are as follows:-

- Advocacy: Examination in Chief – a recorded performance. You will be provided with your Brief before the assessment, and you will need to prepare as if you were dealing with the case in court. Actors will play the role of the witness.
- Advocacy: Cross Examination – a recorded performance. You will be provided with your Brief before the assessment, and you will need to prepare as if you were dealing with the case in court. Actors will play the role of the witness.
- Advocacy: Submissions – a recorded performance with a written element (the drafting of a skeleton argument). This assessment takes the form of a submission to a judge. You receive your Brief some days before the initial hand-in date, at which point you need to hand-in a written skeleton argument. Some days later you will have an appointment where you will make a time-limited submission to an assessor taking the part of the judge.
- Opinion Writing – a seen written assessment.
- Legal Research – a seen written assessment which uses the same papers as the Opinion Writing Assessment. You will be given one calendar week in which to complete the assessment, and both the Legal Research and the Opinion Writing components of the assessment must be submitted at the same time.
- Drafting – a unseen written examination of 3.5 hours duration.
- Conference Skills – a recorded performance. The Conference Skills assessment takes the form of a time-limited filmed performance, with an actor taking the role of your client. You will be provided with your papers a number of days in advance of the assessment.
- Professional Ethics – an unseen examination of 2 hours, generally comprising 40 multiple choice and single best answer questions.

The remaining assessments are centrally set and marked by the Bar Standards Board. This means that all students studying the Vocational Component at the various Authorised Education and Training Providers throughout the country do the same assessment at the same time. These are the assessments in:

- Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution - one assessment in two parts, sat on separate days. Part 1 will be a 2 hour closed book examination comprising multiple choice and single best answer questions and Part 2 will be a 2.5 hour

open book examination comprising multiple choice questions and single best answer questions and rolling case scenarios. All areas of the syllabus can be assessed in each Part. You are permitted to bring a copy of the White Book into the Part 2 assessment. Both parts of the assessment contribute to the whole, therefore you cannot bank a pass in one part because the two parts together form a single whole assessment.

- Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing – one closed-book examination of three hours, comprising 75 multiple choice questions and single best answer questions.

#### The Specialist Legal Practice Component (students on the PGDip with specialism or LLM routes only)

The elective modules will be assessed in the context of a professional skill such as opinion writing, drafting, conference skills, negotiation or mediation advocacy skills or written or oral advocacy. You will be given your papers some days in advance of the hand-in date. You will be expected to work on your own, do the necessary legal research, and complete the required work.

#### The Dissertation/ Clinical Legal Education project (LLM route only)

If you choose to complete the LLM you will also be required to either complete a research-based dissertation (7,500-10,000 words in length) or (full-time students only) the Clinical Legal Education project, for which you will be required to complete a Portfolio around 7,500 – 10,000 words in length. The latter will typically include an analytical report detailing the work you have done for your clients, together with supporting evidence, a report on legal research undertaken to address the problems raised by the client, and a reflective report which explains what you have learnt throughout the process.

#### Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills and abilities that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully. They provide a mechanism by which the standard students reach in an assessment can be measured. Typically, each assessment will be broken down into approximately five Assessment Criteria, each one being an essential component of a good performance in the relevant assessment. A stated number of marks is allocated to each Assessment Criterion.

Grade Descriptors describe the level of skills, knowledge or abilities that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment. They provide a mechanism by which your performance in an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks.

Your performance in an assessment will be marked against each of the Assessment Criteria, based on how your performance measures against the Grade Descriptors. In other words, the Assessment Criteria are the marking scheme, and the Grade Descriptors provide the measure for how many marks you will achieve on each of the Assessment Criteria.

Assessment Criteria for each of the skills and the Grade Descriptors will be made available to you from the beginning of the course in the Programme Handbook

### Feedback

You will be given regular feedback in your skills and knowledge classes. This happens on a weekly basis. Feedback will typically be based on the Assessment Criteria, and is aimed at assisting you to improve your future performances.

Certain exercises are designated as “formal feedback” sessions. These are treated in much the same way as mock exams, and you will be given a grade for your performance measured against the formal assessment criteria, together with written feedback on your work. There are designated times where your marked work will be returned to you.

If you happen to fail an assessment (other than a multiple choice or single best answer test) you will receive written criteria-based feedback on your performance, which will explain the weaknesses in the performance and provide guidance on what is needed to improve. In addition, you are entitled to a feedback and guidance appointment with a tutor for each assessment that you have to resit.

### Assessment Regulations

#### *(a) Postgraduate Diploma*

In order to be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma and be certified as having completed the Vocational Component for the purpose of Call to the Bar, you must successfully complete all of the professional assessments.

The Passing standard for each of the assessments is set out below.

Advocacy: Examination in Chief	60%
Advocacy: Cross examination	60%
Advocacy: Submissions	60%
Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution (Parts 1 and 2)	60% (Subject to the BSB standard setting process*)
Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing	60% (Subject to the BSB standard setting process*)
Professional Ethics	Competent/Not Competent
Opinion Writing	60%
Legal Research	Competent/Not Competent
Drafting	60%
Conference Skills	60%

\* Standard setting means the standard for passing is determined for each examination based on the difficulty of the questions (using a criterion-referenced standard setting technique) and so the mark required to achieve a pass standard may differ between sittings.

Fatal Flaw – A student will fail a skills assessment if it is found that they have committed a “fatal flaw” even if they have otherwise gained sufficient marks in order to pass. A fatal flaw could be, but is not limited to:

- A significant and grave error of law or procedure.
- An error in legal or case analysis that is so clearly incorrect that it would put the interests of the client at risk.



- An error in legal or case analysis that is so clearly incorrect that it puts the barrister at risk of liability for negligence or a disciplinary finding.

If you fail a professional assessment, you will be entitled to two opportunities to resit subject to the requirement that you must pass assessments in all of the Vocational Component modules within five years of the date of the first assessment in order to be called to the Bar. If you fail a component of Legal Research and Opinion Writing, but the other is passed, you only need to resit the failed component.

If you are successful in a resit, you are limited to the minimum number of marks required to pass that assessment if it is an assessment for which marks are awarded, which means you will be graded as Competent for that assessment.

*(b) Postgraduate Diploma (with specialism)*

In order to pass the PG Dip (with specialism) you must successfully complete the 10 compulsory assessments on the Vocational Component and the 2 optional electives. The pass mark for the electives is 60% as described above.

If you fail an elective you will be entitled to two opportunities to resit. If you are successful in the resit your mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark (60%).

*(c) LLM (with specialism)*

In order to pass the LLM you must successfully complete the 10 compulsory assessments on the Vocational Component, the 2 electives and the Dissertation or Clinical Legal Education project.

The pass mark for the Dissertation or Clinical Legal Education Project is 60%. If you fail either of these modules you will be entitled to one opportunity to resubmit. If you are successful on the resubmission you will be awarded the minimum pass mark (60%).

**WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?**

**Postgraduate Diploma**

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Vocational Component	7	120	100

If you are certified as having successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma you will be classified as follows:

Class	% required
Distinction	80%
Merit	70%
Competent	60%

Note that LBM609 and LBM611 are not included when calculating the award classification as they are Competent/Not Competent assessments.

**Postgraduate Diploma (with specialism):**

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Vocational Component	7	120	80
Specialist Legal Practice Component	7	30	20

If you are certified as having successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma with specialism you will be classified as follows:

Class	% required
Distinction	80%
Merit	70%
Competent	60%

Note that LBM609 and LBM611 are not included when calculating the award classification as they are Competent/Not Competent assessments.

#### **LLM (with specialism)**

Programme Stage	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Vocational Component	7	120	66
Specialist Legal Practice Component	7	30	17
Dissertation or Clinical Legal Education project	7	30	17

If you are certified as having successfully completed the LLM you will be classified as follows:

Class	% required
Distinction	80%
Merit	70%
Competent	60%

Note that LBM609 and LBM611 are not included when calculating the award classification as they are Competent/Not Competent assessments.

#### **Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Law Studies:**

If you are not eligible for any of the awards specified above but have successfully complete 60 credits from any part of the programme you will be eligible for the drop down award of the Postgraduate Certificate. This does not give you any practising rights.

The classification of this award is based on all of the modules successfully completed, with the exception of LBM609 and LBM611.

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
All modules	7	60	100%	Distinction	80

Merit	70
Without classification	60

## WHAT WILL I STUDY?

### The Vocational Component

To be certified as completing the Vocational Component and be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma you will be required to complete 10 compulsory modules described below.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Can be Compensated?	Level
Advocacy: Cross Examination	LBM601	10	C	N	7
Advocacy: Examination in Chief	LBM602	10	C	N	7
Advocacy: Submissions	LBM603	10	C	N	7
Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution	LBM604	20	C	N	7
Conference Skills	LBM606	10	C	N	7
Criminal Litigation, Evidence & Sentencing	LBM607	15	C	N	7
Drafting Skills	LBM608	15	C	N	7
Professional Ethics	LBM611	10	C	N	7
Opinion Writing	LBM610	15	C	N	7
Legal Research	LBM609	5	C	N	7

### The Specialist Practice Component

If you choose to complete the LLM or PG Dip (with specialism) you will need to complete two additional electives that are drawn from the following specialist areas of practice. Please note that specialisms/modules will only run if sufficient numbers of students choose them. Where there are a number of electives within a specialism, you may only select two electives.

Specialist Practice Area	Modules [select 2]	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Can be compensated?	Level
Advanced Advocacy Skills	Advanced Criminal Advocacy	LBM620	15	E	N	7
	Advanced Civil Advocacy	LBM621	15	E	N	7
	Family Law	LBM629	15	E	N	7
Advanced Criminal Practice	Crown Court Practice	LBM625	15	E	N	7
	Fraud & Economic Crime	LBM631	15	E	N	7
	Advanced Criminal Advocacy	LBM620	15	E	N	7
	Company & Insolvency	LBM624	15	E	N	7

<b>Corporate Law and Practice</b>	Fraud & Economic Crime	LBM631	15	E	N	7
<b>International Commercial Trade and Dispute Resolution</b>	International ADR	LBM634	15	E	N	7
	International Commercial Trade	LBM636	15	E	N	7
	International Commercial Arbitration	LBM635	15	E	N	7
<b>Advanced Civil Practice</b>	Employment Law & Practice	LBM627	15	E	N	7
	Family Law	LBM629	15	E	N	7
	Judicial Review	LBM638	15	E	N	7
	Advanced Civil Advocacy	LBM621	15	E	N	7
<b>Social Justice and Public Law</b>	Judicial Review	LBM638	15	E	N	7
	Employment Law & Practice	LBM627	15	E	N	7

### The Dissertation/Clinical Legal Education Component

In addition to the two electives, you will be required to complete a dissertation or (for full-time students only) the clinical legal education project as described above. You are not required to complete the other components successfully before progressing to the dissertation or clinical legal education project.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Dissertation	LBM650	30	E	N	7
Clinical Legal Education	LBM651	30	E	N	7

### TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

#### The Vocational Component

The primary purpose of the Vocational Component is to enable you to progress to pupillage and thereafter to a career as a Barrister. Competition for pupillages is intense.

Other possible careers might include:-

- Employed lawyers
- Government Legal Service
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Local Government lawyers
- Regulators
- Transfer to the Solicitors' profession
- Academic lawyers
- Legal publishing
- Finance, industry and banking
- Commerce and business

The CLS runs a Pupillage Advisory Service which is staffed by members of the teaching team, many of whom have experience of pupillage selection from their time in chambers. The service offers a wide range of opportunities, from curriculum vitae advice, to panel events with speakers from a range of chambers and mock interviews.

PGDip (with specialism)

Study of a specialist area of practice will demonstrate that you have developed your understanding of particular aspects of the work of a barrister, and gained insights into specialist practice. This should provide a useful addition to your CV.

LLM (with specialism)

You will find completing the LLM of help to you in a number of different careers. The focus on a particular area of legal practice will stand you in good stead in applying for pupillage or employment in that particular field. The fact that you have undertaken independent research and written a 7,500 – 10,000 word dissertation or clinical legal education research project will be evidence of your research and writing skills. It may also provide you with the basis for later doctoral research and an academic career.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to: <http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>.

**WILL I GET ANY PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION?**

**Accrediting Body:** Bar Standards Board (for the Vocational Component of the course)

**Nature of Accreditation**

The accreditation arrangements are set out in the Bar Standards Board's Authorisation Framework for the Approval of Education and Training Organisations and the supporting Guidance for organisations intending to provide vocational Bar training under the Authorisation Framework.

Accreditation of the programme by the BSB is by submission of an application with supporting documentation and evidence, together with authorisation visits and/or meetings conducted by the Bar Standards Board. Monitoring is through annual reporting; a number of the Vocational Component assessments being set and marked centrally by the Bar Standards Board; and approval of results by External Examiners appointed by the Bar Standards Board.

**HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?**

This is a postgraduate course with minimum entry requirements prescribed by the Bar Standards Board.

The minimum entry requirement is an undergraduate degree normally classified as 2:1 or above (or equivalent). This can be either a law degree or a non-law degree plus further graduate/post-graduate study in Law and in either case must cover the seven foundations of legal knowledge and satisfy the Professional Statement competence 1.2.

[The Bar Standards Board](#) can advise on non-standard qualifications. Please note that students with a degree classification lower than a 2:1 will only be admitted if their application discloses clear evidence of academic ability to work at a 2:1 level and/or significant and relevant professional experience. Students must commence the Vocational Component of training for the Bar within five years of completion of the academic component of training. This is to ensure their legal knowledge remains current. Anyone who wishes to commence the vocational component after this time limit is required to reactivate their stale qualifications and information about this can be obtained in the Bar Qualification Manual on the Bar Standard Board's website.

In addition, you must:

- (a) exercise good English language skills. You must have an effective command of the language and be able to use it appropriately, accurately and fluently so as to handle complex and detailed argumentation. You must be able to use correct English grammar, spelling and punctuation. You must use correct and appropriate vocabulary, English grammar, spelling and punctuation in all communications and speak fluent English. This competence is set out in paragraph 1.8 of the Professional Statement and is a prescribed admission requirement for entry to the programme. In order to demonstrate this Competence and satisfy this admission requirement, you must be able to demonstrate English language ability that is at least equivalent to a minimum score of 7.5 in each section of the IELTS academic test or 73 in each part of the Pearson test of English (academic).

(c) by the time of enrolment on the programme you must be a member of one of the Inns of Court.

Applications can be made via the University's online postgraduate application system. Applications will open in autumn each year. In addition to a written application, applicants whose written application meets the basic requirements may be required to take part in an additional selection exercise.

In reaching selection decisions, we will take account of the following:

- Degree performance (actual or predicted)
- Evidence of intellectual ability
- Interpersonal skills
- Advocacy and public speaking skills
- Personal organisational skills
- Your references.
- Commitment to the practice of law.

Offers will be for all routes; you will be required to select which route you intend to study when you accept your offer.

UK applicants should be aware that if you take the LLM route you will be eligible to apply for a government-backed postgraduate loan, see <https://www.gov.uk/postgraduate->

[loan/overview](#). The PGDip or PGDip with specialism are not eligible for this funding. Students who obtain such a loan will need to complete the full programme (they will not be able switch route) or else may breach the terms of their loan agreement.

The City Law School has a Policy on Accreditation of Prior Learning and Prior Experiential Learning in relation to Bar Professional Studies, a link to which is available on the application page of the website.

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