

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW**



**GUIDE FOR**

**1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

**AND**

**1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR STUDENTS UNDER HKU-PKU DUAL DEGREE PROGRAMME**

**AND**

**3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR STUDENTS UNDER HKU-UCL DUAL DEGREE PROGRAMME**

**2022-2023**

# **WELCOME to the Department of Law.**

This Guide provides important information. Please read it carefully.

---

1. [General Introduction](#)
2. [Some Practical Information](#)
3. [Academic Advisers](#)
4. [Disciplinary Matters](#)
5. [Exemption from LLB Curriculum Requirements and Related Matters](#)
  - a) [Exemptions from Chinese Language Enhancement Course](#)
  - b) [Exemption from normal pattern of study for Mooting and Dispute Resolution \(Capstone\)](#)
6. [Policy on Extra Credit Applications](#)
7. [Student Exchange](#)
8. [International Mooting](#)
9. [Student Researchers Scheme](#)
10. [Equal Opportunity](#)

**Information contained in this Guide can also be found on the [Faculty website](#).**

## 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Students,

On behalf of the teachers in the Department of Law of the University of Hong Kong, I am pleased to welcome you to your first year in our LLB, BBA(Law)&LLB, BSc&LLB, BSocSc(Govt&Laws)&LLB and BA&LLB programmes. I also extend my welcome to students from HKU-UCL Dual Degree programme who starts their third year at HKU and students from HKU-PKU Dual Degree programme who start their first year in 2022-23. We are fortunate to continue to attract a large number of applicants and be in a position to choose those with a potential to contribute to the process of collective learning in this institution and to the community as a whole.

You will find the Department is well endowed with resources and effectively organized. We are a large department comprised of experienced teachers, originating from many parts of the world, having gained exposure to different legal traditions, possessing impressive academic credentials, and having accumulated considerable research and teaching experience. Our teachers display an independence of mind, yet function as a cohesive entity. You will find them well informed, responsible and accessible.

The curriculum we offer is comprehensive, innovative and subject to ongoing evaluation and review. Our objective is to prepare you to function effectively as leading professionals in Hong Kong, China, Asia and around the world. While professional skills are accorded great attention, the educational process extends beyond the purely technical domain and encompasses the broad social context of legal practice.

Legal education is not expected to be a one-way process. The communication flow should ideally be circular: from the teacher to the student and back to the teacher. This is known as feedback, something that we strongly encourage. Indeed, we welcome students' initiatives that go beyond the mere provision of feedback. There are many channels for demonstrating your intellectual activism, most notably our international mooted programme [see [section 8](#)] and the Student Researchers Scheme [see [section 9](#)]. Please take advantage of these unique opportunities.

### **Organizational Framework**

The Faculty of Law consists of two Departments and five research centres. They are Centre for Comparative and Public Law (CCPL), Asian Institute of International Financial Law (AIIFL), Law and Technology Centre (LawTech), Centre for Chinese Law (CCL), and Centre for Medical Ethics and Law (joint with HKU's Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine).

You are in the Department of Law (the Department). The other Department in the Faculty is the Department of Professional Legal Education (PLE Department) which is responsible for

the PCLL programme. Whereas the Faculty Office is charged with student enrolment, registration, scholarship and matters related to the conferment of degrees, the Department is responsible for the day-to-day running of the teaching programmes. Thus, most issues concerning your study will be dealt with by the Department.

Kindly note that, in addition to the Head, the Department is managed by a team of dedicated teachers with various responsibilities. If you need advice or assistance on any of these matters, please read the relevant section of this Guide and then approach the relevant colleague.

For most administrative matters (eg. change of tutorial groups, students' functions, booking of rooms etc), please approach Ms Estella Ng ([elwng@hku.hk](mailto:elwng@hku.hk)), Ms Lydia Bute ([lbute@hku.hk](mailto:lbute@hku.hk)) or Ms May Fung ([fhymay@hku.hk](mailto:fhymay@hku.hk)).

Please note students who are transferred from other HKU programmes and intend to claim advanced standing should do so upon registration and no later than 9 September 2022. You should submit your application to the Head of Department via Tristan Wong ([wtristan@hku.hk](mailto:wtristan@hku.hk)).

Personal problems, advice on studying, etc. should be raised with your Academic Adviser (see [section 3](#)).

There are various channels of communication between you and the Department. You will be asked to elect your class representatives in September / early October. Indeed, the earlier the better. There are regular meetings between the class representatives and staff members (including the Dean, Head, Programme Directors, Year Coordinators and Course Co-ordinators) to exchange views on matters of mutual concern.

### **List of Programme Coordinators:**

#### LLB

Ms Cora Chan (Programme Director)	<a href="mailto:cora@hku.hk">cora@hku.hk</a>
Dr David Kwok (Deputy Programme Director)	<a href="mailto:davkwok@hku.hk">davkwok@hku.hk</a>
Mr Jacky Yeung (First year Experience Coordinator)	<a href="mailto:yeungick@hku.hk">yeungick@hku.hk</a>
Dr David Kwok (Second Year Coordinator)	<a href="mailto:davkwok@hku.hk">davkwok@hku.hk</a>
Dr Peter Chau (Third Year Coordinator)	<a href="mailto:pscchau@hku.hk">pscchau@hku.hk</a>
Mr Michael Jackson (Upper Years Coordinators)	<a href="mailto:mjackson@hku.hk">mjackson@hku.hk</a>

#### BBA(Law)&LLB

Mr Michael Jackson (Programme Director)	<a href="mailto:mjackson@hku.hk">mjackson@hku.hk</a>
Mr Jacky Yeung (Deputy Programme Director)	<a href="mailto:yeungick@hku.hk">yeungick@hku.hk</a>

### BSc&LLB

Dr Ryan Whalen (Programme Director)

[whalen@hku.hk](mailto:whalen@hku.hk)

### BSocS(Govt&Laws)&LLB

Dr Eric Ip (Programme Director)

[ericip@hku.hk](mailto:ericip@hku.hk)

Dr Peter Chau (Deputy Programme Director)

[pscchau@hku.hk](mailto:pscchau@hku.hk)

### BA&LLB

Professor Marco Wan (Programme Director, Law)

[mwan@hku.hk](mailto:mwan@hku.hk)

Dr Anya Adair (Deputy Director, Arts)

[adair@hku.hk](mailto:adair@hku.hk)

### UCL-HKU dual degree programme

Professor Johannes Chan (Co-Programme Director)

[johannes@hku.hk](mailto:johannes@hku.hk)

Professor Marco Wan (Co-Programme Director)

[mwan@hku.hk](mailto:mwan@hku.hk)

### HKU-PKU dual degree programme

Professor Yun Zhao (Programme Director)

[zhaoy@hku.hk](mailto:zhaoy@hku.hk)

You are of course welcome to discuss anything with any teaching staff member, though, as a matter of courtesy, please try to make an appointment in advance via email (email addresses are available through the [Faculty webpage](#)). In particular, you are advised to meet your Academic Adviser at the beginning of the academic term and to maintain regular contact with them throughout the year (see [section 3](#)). Our administrative staff are also very helpful and experienced, and would be pleased to offer assistance.

## **The Student Corpus**

Our student body is more diversified than sometimes assumed. It consists of both JUPAS and non-JUPAS (ie. students from international schools, returnees from overseas, students from the PRC etc) candidates. Furthermore, in the course of your studies, you will come across students from our LLB degree programme, three integrated degree programmes, two dual degree programmes, as well as exchange and visiting students from around the world. You should find interacting with this diverse group of students a rewarding experience.

## **Class Attendance**

Law teaching variously involves lectures, tutorials and seminar groups. Please note that all tutorials and seminar groups are compulsory and your attendance is recorded. Please be punctual when attending lectures and classes. Teachers do not have the luxury of waiting for you and, as a matter of courtesy to teachers and fellow-students, it is appropriate to

apologize if you are late for tutorials / seminars. Should you not be able to attend any particular tutorial / seminar class, you should provide an explanation in writing to the teacher, preferably in advance. If your absence is on medical grounds, you must submit a medical certificate. If you are absent without explanation from tutorial or seminar on two or more occasions, you may receive a letter from me requesting an explanation and warning you of the consequences of non-attendance. Pursuant to the LLB Regulations, you will not be allowed to take the final examination of the relevant course if you fail to attend 70% of the relevant tutorials.

You are responsible for selecting your tutorial or seminar groups via the Tutorial Sign-Up Application system operated by the University's Information Technology Services. If you do not select your own tutorials / seminars, you will be assigned to tutorial / seminar groups. In general, once selected or assigned, you are not permitted to change to another tutorial / seminar group. If your tutorial / seminar timetable clashes with your other commitments, you must submit an application for permission to change to a different tutorial / seminar group (see [the appropriate form](#)), providing detailed reasons. Permission will normally not be given unless you can find someone to swap with you. Hall or sports activities, private tuition, and part-time jobs are not permissible reasons for changing tutorial / seminar groups. If you change tutorial / seminar group without permission, you may be regarded as having been absent from your original tutorial / seminar group, and persistent absences may result in you not being permitted to take the final examination.

Please note the dates of examinations if you are planning to be away in December / January or May / June. If you are absent from end-of-semester exams and are permitted by the Board of Examiners to take supplementary exams, you should note that all supplementary in-hall exams will take place in May (for December exams) and last week of July – first week of August (for May exams).

## **Law Library**

We have one of the finest Law Libraries in Asia. You should expect to spend a great deal of your study time in the coming years in the Law Library.

The Law Library will organize various orientation tours at the beginning of the academic year. When visiting the Law Library, please keep quiet, as there are students, teachers, researchers and practitioners working in the Library throughout the year. Please note that this is a place for study, not for social gathering. The librarians are keen to serve and this should be duly reflected in your interactions with them.

If you wish to look for physical copies of materials related to Hong Kong Law which are temporarily unavailable in the Law Library, some of these materials can be found in the Hong Kong Collection section of the Main Library. Note, however, the materials in the Hong Kong Collection section are not for loan.

Further information about the HKU Libraries (e.g opening hours, booking a study table or discussion room, access to electronic resources, etc.) are also available at the website of the [HKU Libraries](#).

## **University Life**

Your time at the University of Hong Kong will be a crucial phase in your lifelong process of personal development. Our emphasis is on thinking, participation and expression. You will find that unlike secondary school, your teachers will often not provide you with model answers, or indeed any well-defined answer. The role of your law teachers is to facilitate your learning, not spoon-feed you. We employ different teaching methods, most of which emphasize preparation and in-class participation. You may at first find it difficult to adjust to the new learning environment, as your previous study experiences may not have prepared you adequately for the learning challenges you will encounter at University. We also understand you may at first find it difficult to accept that there is no right answer, but this uncertainty is the very nature of law and human existence. Adopt an open attitude, and you will find the experience rewarding.

Law School involves a considerable amount of hard work, and there is no easy path to success. You are a full time student, and we plan your legal education on the basis you are prepared and willing to study for 8 hours a day for 5 days a week. We also encourage you to take part in extra-curricular activities, since these form an important part of university education. But you have to learn to know your limitations, to be self-disciplined, and to manage your time and set your priorities.

May I wish you all the best in the coming academic year, and every success in your pursuit of knowledge with us.

**Professor Yun Zhao**  
Head  
Department of Law  
The University of Hong Kong

## 2. SOME PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Timetable

1. The timetable for classes will shortly be posted on the [Faculty website](#). For teaching dates in both semesters in 2022-2023, please see the tentative timetable on our webpage (go to [Academic Resources Support Centre \(ARSC\)](#)).
2. Please note that lectures commence on 1 September 2022. Tutorials usually start in the following week, but please check the [website](#) for specific / contrary instructions in individual courses.
3. Please note that subjects set out in CAPITAL LETTERS in the Timetable refer to lectures in the subjects (attended by all students taking the subject). Tutorial classes (meeting in small groups) and seminar groups are indicated by small letters. You should find out the group to which you belong for the purpose of each subject by consulting the lists that will be posted on our [webpage](#). You may be in different tutorial / seminar groups for different subjects.
4. As mentioned above, students are not permitted to change their assigned tutorial / seminar groups unless exceptional circumstances exist, and the approval of the Head of Department must be obtained. All such applications should be submitted (see [the appropriate form](#)) by the stipulated deadline (usually within the first two weeks of the term). No application for change of tutorials/seminars will be entertained after that date.
5. Teachers are identified in the timetable by their initials. For teachers' full names and office room numbers, please consult the faculty website or the e-boards (located on the Ground Floor and 10/F of Cheng Yu Tung Tower). You may make an appointment to see any of them by emailing them directly. Please note that every student is assigned an Academic Adviser / Personal Tutor. Details of the Academic Adviser / Personal Tutor system are provided in [section 3](#).

### Notices & Email

6. There are various means of communication between you and the Department. Notices are posted on the Faculty webpage ([Student Intranet](#)). Please check the webpage from time to time. You are deemed to have notice of all notices posted there.
7. Some important information will be placed on the Faculty Homepage. Please check the Faculty Homepage from time to time. In most courses, teaching materials -- as well as instructions for class preparation -- are placed on Moodle (you may access Moodle via [HKU Portal](#)).

8. In some urgent cases or during vacation, notices may be sent to you by email. All of you are assigned a student email account. Students may also have other email addresses. For communication purposes, we will use your university email address only. You are again deemed to have notice of any notice sent to your university email address.

## Teaching Materials

9. Teaching materials (course materials, outlines etc) are mainly available through Moodle. It is also common that you have to download materials from various websites.

## Submission of Assignments

10. Unless teachers in a particular course instruct otherwise, you are required to submit all coursework and written assignments through Moodle. You may access Moodle through [HKU Portal](#). You are reminded that all written assignments submitted via Moodle will be run through plagiarism detection software (see our policy and penalty on plagiarism <https://course.law.hku.hk/policy-and-guidelines/>).

## Class Attendance

11. Attendance in tutorials/seminars is compulsory. Students who repeatedly fail to attend class without a satisfactory reason may be deprived of the right to take the examination at the end of the year; if the student takes the examination and fails, previous absences in tutorials/seminars may lead to the student not being given the opportunity to take a supplementary examination. Any student who is absent from any tutorial/seminar should therefore submit a letter explaining the absence to the tutor concerned. Please refer to [section 4](#) for further details regarding disciplinary matters.

## Plagiarism

12. As students, you have rights as well as responsibilities and duties. One of your most important duties is to comply with the University's rules regarding the writing of coursework assignments and examinations. For example, as far as written coursework and assignments are concerned, you must not engage in plagiarism. Plagiarism is a very serious academic offence and in recent years has been dealt with severely by the University. In some instances, law students have been expelled from the University

after they were found guilty of plagiarising the work of others, including other students. The meaning of plagiarism is explained in the memorandum on disciplinary matters in [section 4](#) and will be further elaborated in a special class in your Legal Research & Writing course. All written assignments will be submitted through Moodle and run through plagiarism detection software. If plagiarism is detected, the item of assessment will receive a mark of 0 (F grade).

13. Note also that students are required to attach to all assignments or take-home exams a cover-sheet containing a declaration (to be signed by the submitting student) that the rules pertaining to plagiarism have been complied with fully (see [the assignment cover sheet](#)). Obviously, students must not attempt to submit the same piece of written work in more than one course.
14. Further details about plagiarism (including how to avoid it) are available at the [University's Teaching and Learning](#) website.

### **Copyright & Photocopying**

15. Extensive photocopying of books is to be avoided. It is a breach of copyright as well as an unethical practice. It is also discouraging to the authors (some of whom may be our own colleagues) who have spent many hours in producing their work. Notices regarding fair practices are posted in the University's Libraries and often on photocopy machines.

### **Basic Courtesy**

16. From time to time we hear comments that law students are rude and disrespectful, whether to other students, to the University's teaching and administrative staff, or to downtown legal practitioners. This is not true for most of our students, yet it takes only a few to give this kind of general impression. The art of advocacy is persuasion, not offensiveness. Please be polite and patient, particularly with administrative staff, and especially at the beginning of the academic year when there may be a large number of students' enquiries. Rude and offensive manner will not help you get your desired result.

### **Good Email Manners**

17. When you write letters or send emails and text messages to your friends you can be as informal as you wish. However, when you are writing to other people, such as teachers, administrators or practitioners, it is important that you use proper and polite language. You will communicate more effectively, and it will give people a

better impression of your abilities. Remember that your future supervisors and clients are not likely to tolerate bad email manners. Commonsense, politeness, and correct grammar and spelling are the basic ingredients of a proper email. It does not necessarily have to be written in a very formal manner. We have compiled a list of reminders below. We hope you will find them useful.

- a. A proper email should begin with an appropriate salutation.
  - For example, **“Dear Dr. Suzuki,”**; **“Dear Miss Chan,”**; **“Dear Ms Chan,”**
  - Never *“Hi,”*; *“Hey,”*; *“Dear Mary Chan”* (if you know the gender of the addressee); *“Dear Madam”* (if you know the name of the addressee); *“Dear Ms CHAN”* (putting words in capital letters in emails gives the tone that one is shouting).
- b. After the salutation, begin the body of the email with an explanation of why you are sending the email, or explain the request that you are making.
- c. If you have a question about a course, say which course it is. This is because a teacher usually teaches more than one course each term. Give enough context so the teacher knows where your question is coming from, and how to identify you.
- d. If you have a request, say it politely.
  - For example, **“I would like to know”**; **“I wonder if you could kindly ..”**; **“May I ask”**; **“Is it possible that ...”**; **“Do you mind letting me know..”**; **“I would like to ask for a favour.”**; **“I would be most grateful if you could let me know..”**.
  - Never *“I want to know”*; *“Please tell me when the assignment is due”*; *“Please keep me informed.”* (Note that just because you use the word “please”, it does not mean that you are being polite. “Please” can be used in commands, e.g., “Please behave yourself.”; “Please write polite emails.”).
  - After stating your request, never say *“Please reply.”*; *“Please reply as soon as possible.”*; or *“I look forward to your prompt assistance.”* Even if a matter is urgent, it is very rude to say so, because these statements read more like commands than requests. Just explain that the matter is urgent, and the teacher / administrator will understand.
  - Do not chase up the teacher / administrator for a response less than three days after you send your email.
  - After waiting for some time, if you have not heard back and would like to check, do so politely. For example, **“I wonder if my email to you on [date] has**

**arrived safely.”**

- If a teacher has responded to your request, always send a return email saying **“Thank you”**. It is very rude to not to do this.
- e. If you would like to make an appointment with the teacher / administrator, write it politely:
- For example, **“I wonder if I could make an appointment with you ...”**
  - Never **“May I have an appointment with you? so that you may have a chance to help.”**
  - Suggest a few time slots, but always say something like **“If these times do not suit you, please feel free to let me know any other time that you prefer / is convenient to you.”**
  - If you cannot make the date suggested, say **“I am sorry I cannot come to see you on [Monday]”**. Never say **“I am not available on [Monday]”** (this statement is appropriate only if spoken by someone in authority to his deputy).
  - If you can make the date suggested, say **“[Monday] is fine with me. I look forward to seeing you then.”**; never say **“I am happy to see you on [Monday].”** (this statement is appropriate if spoken by someone in authority to his deputy).
- f. If you have a suggestion for the teacher, never say **“I suggest you [call me at 2555 6666]”**; **“You may send the notes to my home address.”** (These are polite commands. However, if spoken by a student to a teacher / an administrator, it is very impolite.)
- g. The content of your email should never contain commands. Be careful not to write as if you are stating a legal rule, for example:
- I have decided to take 4 courses, ... *on the condition* that it is acknowledged by the Faculty that I would have all the credits I need to graduate for LLB in HKU by June 2021.
- h. You should close the email as follows
- For example, **“Best wishes, Lala / Lala Lau”**; **“Sincerely yours, Lala”**; **“Regards, Lala”**; **“Best, Lala”** (the last one is more informal)

- Identify your true name, never say “*A student of contract law*”; “*Your tutee*”. Give your last name to be more formal.
  - Don’t end your email by giving just the name of an association or committee such as “**Yours, XX Society**”. You should provide your full name and the name of your association / committee.
  - Never leave the email unsigned.
- i. Always re-read your emails and check their spellings before sending them out.

### 3. ACADEMIC ADVISERS

We have adopted a system of Academic Advisers for the purpose of assisting students' academic development. Each student is assigned a teacher in the Department, who will act as the student's Academic Adviser. The student may consult his or her Academic Adviser from time to time on various academic matters relating to his or her study in this Department and this University. In general, your Academic Adviser is intended to be an academic mentor and a friend. His or her roles are:

- To facilitate your transition to university
- To help you clarify your academic and career goals and to draw up plans to achieve these goals
- To enable you to make informed choices in course selection and other academic matters
- To provide guidance on your learning experience
- To discuss academic performance and implication on future career
- To refer you to other relevant university resources

Your Academic Adviser should be your point of first contact for guidance on academic matters and career planning. You are strongly encouraged to meet with your Academic Adviser at least once every semester in your first year of study. Regarding specific academic matters relating to a particular course taught in this Department, students should consult the lecturer in charge of the course concerned, or the tutor in that course.

The details of your own adviser are available through the SIS. A list of all teachers in the Department, together with their initials and their room numbers, is also available on the [webpage](#). You are responsible for taking the initiative to contact your Academic Adviser in the beginning of each semester, and whenever advice and help is needed. To arrange to meet with your Academic Adviser, please send him / her an email to make an appointment.

Apart from Academic Advisers, each Year One student is also assigned a senior student as Student Adviser. We encourage a sense of solidarity within our student community and we hope the Student Advisers Scheme will be able to build up a social network between seniors and juniors in our Department. You can seek advice from your assigned Student Adviser if you want a student perspective to your academic questions. Details of your Student Adviser will be sent to you in due course.

## 4. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

There are several important rules applicable to you as a student in the Department of Law, the violation of which may result in serious consequences for you.

### Attendance at Tutorials / Seminars

In all LLB courses, attendance at tutorials / seminars is compulsory. Our LLB programme is not an external degree programme where students study by themselves and then sit the examination set by the educational institution. Tutorials / seminars are a vehicle by which teaching instruction is provided and the student's academic progress is monitored. According to the rules which are currently in force, failure to comply with the requirement to attend compulsory classes may constitute failure "to follow instruction", and may lead to the student concerned being deprived of the right to take the examination or submit assignments in the subject(s) concerned.

This memo constitutes notice to you of the serious consequences of failing to attend classes for which attendance is compulsory. Students who fail to attend such classes without satisfactory explanation assume the risk of not being allowed to take the examination at the end of the course or submit assignments.

If you need to be absent from class for a legitimate reason, you must seek the teacher's permission in advance or as soon as possible thereafter if advance notice cannot be given. If you are unable to attend class because of illness, a medical certificate for your absence must be provided afterwards. Please also note Regulation G8(a) and (b) of the University's General Regulations, which provides:

“(a) Attendance:

A student shall follow his courses of instruction and complete the requirements of his curriculum to the satisfaction of the Heads of the Departments concerned.

(b) Absence:

- (i) A student who cannot attend for between three and seven days inclusive because of his illness shall, if he is registered in a Faculty, inform the Dean of the Faculty concerned in writing at the earliest opportunity. A student who is registered other than in a Faculty shall in similar manner inform the Registrar. When longer absence is necessary or when absence from examinations is in question, a student shall submit in writing an application for leave of absence to the Dean, or the Registrar, as the case may be, together with a certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner ...
- (ii) A student who, during his studies, desires leave of absence for more than two full consecutive days for non-medical reasons shall, if he is registered in a Faculty, apply to the Dean of the Faculty concerned in writing at the earliest opportunity, stating the reasons for which the leave of absence is sought. A student who is registered other than in a Faculty shall in similar manner apply to the Registrar. Permission for such leave shall be granted only

in exceptional circumstances and shall not be granted by reason only that the student has already made arrangements to be absent."

## Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

In writing coursework assignments and final examinations, it is extremely important to bear in mind the rules pertaining to plagiarism. In summary, plagiarism means the taking or copying of others' work and presenting it in a manner as if the work is one's own. Regulation I of the University's Regulations Governing Students' Conduct Concerning Assessment provides:

"A candidate shall not engage in plagiarism nor employ nor seek to employ any other unfair means at an examination or in any other form of assessment. Plagiarism is defined as direct copying of textual material or wilful use of other people's data and ideas, and presenting them as one's own without acknowledgement, whether or not such materials, data and ideas have been published.

In conducting research, a candidate shall not engage in any misconduct which shall include, but not limited to, plagiarism; fabrication, falsification; unethical collection or unauthorized use of data; improper ascription of authorship including the listing of authors without their permission, attributing work to others who have not in fact contributed to the research, or the lack of appropriate acknowledgement of work primarily produced by another person; non-disclosure of potential conflict of interest; non-compliance with regulations including conducting research without obtaining relevant ethical approval and infringement of another person's intellectual property rights; and other practices which seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting or reporting research.

A candidate at a University assessment who infringes any of the above regulations is liable to be the subject of a complaint before the Disciplinary Committee under the provisions of Statute XXXI-2(1)(g)."

The most common form of plagiarism is copying from published works of writers or the essays of other students without proper acknowledgement. It is not enough merely to acknowledge the source by listing the source in the bibliography. If you take a word-for-word passage, sentence or phrase from others' work, you must put the passage, sentence or phrase between quotation marks to demonstrate that it is others' work and provide the source. If you are paraphrasing or adopting an argument made in a book or article, you must also acknowledge the source. Normally you will do this with a footnote at the end of a sentence each time a new point is written. Students often make the mistake of citing the source only once, usually after the first sentence in a paragraph or after a heading, without making subsequent citations when the source is used or referred to again. Giving credit where credit is due does not in any way detract from the force of your argument. It is simply making clear with integrity which ideas are yours and which ideas belong to others.

Once an assignment has been completed, you should re-read your paper with a view to spotting possible instances of plagiarism. This is important because oftentimes plagiarism arises from just plain carelessness. However, whether the plagiarism was intentional or due to a careless mistake, it will be treated as equally serious, and the consequences will likely be the same. When re-reading your paper, you should ask yourself the following question: "are there any passages in this paper which are either simply the words of another, or

would lead the reader to think that the point being made is mine when in fact it is someone else's idea?" Given the serious consequences arising from a finding of plagiarism, it is better to err on the side of giving too much credit rather than giving insufficient credit. If you are unsure whether you are properly complying with the plagiarism rules, you should always check with your teacher before you submit your assessed work.

Plagiarism is academic theft and is severely penalized in academic institutions, including the University of Hong Kong. Where portions of two or more students' essays are found to be very similar, plagiarism may be inferred and both assignments will be failed (ie. a student who allows his or her work to be plagiarized by others will be penalized to the same extent as those who plagiarize the student's work).

Plagiarized work will be given a mark of zero. On top of that, the matter may be treated as a disciplinary offence (just like the case of cheating during an examination) and referred to the University's Disciplinary Committee under Statute XXXI of the University's Statutes and the Disciplinary Committee Regulations. In this regard, your attention that a student found guilty by the Disciplinary Committee of a disciplinary offence may be subject to several kinds of sanctions, including a published reprimand, suspension from classes or expulsion from the University.

In recent years, law students (both LLB and LLM students) have been warned, suspended from their study, and in one case, expelled because of plagiarism. Law students who plagiarize often blame their poor standards in English for their behaviour. Poor English is not an excuse and will not gain any leniency from the full application of the plagiarism rules. Given the high ethical standards expected of future legal professionals, the Faculty of Law is greatly concerned about plagiarism by law students. To deter plagiarism, teaching staff have been instructed to take an active role in spotting plagiarism and to refer the matter for disciplinary action, in addition to awarding zero marks, where it occurs.

You should also note that the Law Society of Hong Kong now requires all applicants for registration of training contracts to indicate in their application documents whether they have at any time been found guilty of any disciplinary offence involving dishonesty by the institute(s) at which the applicant completed his or her academic and professional stages of their legal education.

## **Conduct during Examinations**

The same Regulations Governing Conduct at Examinations also stipulate that students may not, unless expressly permitted, bring any printed or written matter to an examination. In the case of an examination in which students have been permitted to bring in their own materials, they should study carefully the rules regarding the extent to which such materials may be marked, underlined or annotated. As in the case of plagiarism, a breach of the rules will be referred to the University's Disciplinary Committee.

Examination procedures can be found on the website: <http://www.exam.hku.hk/>

## **5. EXEMPTIONS FROM LLB CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS AND RELATED MATTERS**

### **Exemption from Chinese Language Enhancement Course**

The graduation requirements for both LLB and double-degree curricula include successful completion of a 6-credit Chinese Language Enhancement Course. You are required to take the course in your third year. Full details of options will be available in due course.

If you have not taken any Chinese language courses during your secondary education, you may apply for exemption from the Chinese enhancement requirement, as it would be difficult for you to follow the courses at the undergraduate level. In its place you should take inter-faculty electives offered by the Language Centre in place of the Chinese Language Enhancement Course. In general, you are not permitted to take courses other than language courses in substitution.

All applications must be made before the commencement of your third year. Late applications will not be considered.

In choosing your course, you should ascertain the timetable of that course from the Language Centre in order to avoid clashes with your law classes. It is your responsibility to enrol in the Language Centre, which will consider individual applications before permitting enrolment. Having been allowed to enrol, you should then apply to respective Programme Director for approval of course selection [see appropriate form on the [webpage](#)]. Upon approval, your application will be forwarded to the Dean of the Faculty of Law for exemption from the Chinese Language Enhancement Course. Once exemption is granted, you will receive confirmation of your enrolment in the substituted course.

You may be interested to learn that over 80% of the trials in Magistrates Courts are conducted in Cantonese these days, and that written documentary evidence in Chinese will not be translated. Virtually all commercial documents with PRC institutions are also in Chinese. Some law firms expressly require proficiency in the Chinese language in their recruitment. It will thus only be to your advantage to be proficient in the Chinese language.

### **Exemption from Normal Pattern of Study for Mooting and Dispute Resolution (Capstone)**

Under the University degree regulations, the LLB regulations and the regulations for our LLB integrated degree programmes (hereinafter known collectively as “the Regulations”), a student must fulfil a capstone requirement: Mooting and Dispute Resolution, in order to complete the curriculum.

To satisfy the capstone requirement, a student must pass the six-credit course “Mooting & Dispute Resolution”, which is offered during Semester 1, with moots typically held in February-April every year.

In the past, students who went on exchange sometimes found it practically impossible to complete the compulsory moot requirement in Year 3 (LLB students) / Year 4 (Integrated Degree students). Students who will go on exchange can defer Mooting & Dispute Resolution to their final year. Please refer to [section 7](#) for more information.

In addition, we also believe it is fair to allow students to satisfy the capstone requirement where he or she has participated as a team member in an international moot competition and has enrolled in and passed the related International Mooting course. This recognizes the enormous amount of effort and work that team members are expected to put into the competition (see [section 8](#)).

## **6. POLICY ON EXTRA CREDIT APPLICATIONS**

No permission is required if LLB students intend to take extra credits. However, students are not allowed to take more than 6 extra credits in each semester (ie. no more than 36 credits for each semester) and they are only allowed to take up to 72 credits in one academic year. Most importantly, students are not allowed to graduate earlier than the normal period of four academic years (single degree and HKU-UCL Dual Degree) or five academic years (integrated double-degrees and HKU-PKU Dual Degree).

For students under HKU-UCL and HKU-PKU Dual Degree Programmes, no overloading is allowed.

## 7. STUDENT EXCHANGE

It is possible to study for part of your degree on an approved exchange programme<sup>1</sup>. This is a worthwhile experience which will broaden your horizons and perspective.

If you are interested in studying abroad for one or two semesters - which you may do in your upper years (single degree students normally will go on exchange in their third or fourth year, Integrated-Degree students may go on exchange in their third, fourth or fifth year) - this note provides some basic information on student exchange.

1. There are two exchange schemes:
  - (a) One is the [University Worldwide Exchange Programme](#) which provides scholarships.
  - (b) The other is the [Faculty Based Exchange Scheme](#). For the Faculty Based Exchange Scheme, we can only provide limited scholarships.
2. Check whether the overseas university where you intend to enroll is within our approved exchange programme. Such information is available from the [International Affairs Office](#) in the Registry (for the University Worldwide Exchange) and on the [Law Faculty Homepage](#). The Law Faculty Exchange Briefing Session will be held in September every year. For more information, please refer to our Exchange [webpage](#).
3. Study the Regulations applicable to your particular degree programme. The Regulations for LLB, BBA(Law)&LLB, BSS(G&L)&LLB, BA(Literary Studies)&LLB are significantly different. There are also differences for different years of enrollment in a single programme. Make sure you get the Regulations that apply to you (see: [Regulations and Syllabuses](#)). If you intend to seek admission to the PCLL, you should also study the [PCLL Admission Requirements](#) carefully. Discuss your plans with your Academic Adviser / Personal Tutor AND the Director of Exchange (Outgoing), Mr Alex Mak ([makalex@hku.hk](mailto:makalex@hku.hk)). Talk to students who have gone on exchange before, but be careful with this advice, since the regulations that applied to students in previous years do not apply to you (since the various degree Regulations differ from year to year).
4. Find out more about the University which you would like to go to and the courses it offers. Information about most universities is available on the internet. You may note that in North America (US and Canada), law is a postgraduate degree. Therefore, if you are admitted to these universities under the University Scheme, you may not be allowed to do law. We have exchange agreements with some of the North American universities and they are prepared to allow our LLB and Integrated Degree students to take their law courses. In such cases you will be studying with

---

<sup>1</sup> Students under HKU-UCL Dual Degree Programme might go on exchange but they will have to defer their graduation and the maximum number of credits they can transfer from exchange institution is 18 credits.

postgraduate students. Some universities may have pre-requisites for taking certain courses. Australian universities, of course, have a different semester term because of the seasonal difference.

## Credit Transfer

5. Credits taken at an overseas university can be transferred towards your HKU LLB degree requirements so that you are deemed to have done the required units under our LLB regulations. With careful planning, you should be able to graduate with an HKU LLB within the normal period of four years (single degree) or five years (integrated degrees).
6. In order to transfer your credits taken abroad, you have to apply to the Head of Department via the Director of Exchange (Outgoing) for approval of your course enrolment proposal. You must prepare a study plan which indicates which courses you have already taken and how you propose to satisfy all remaining LLB requirements (as well as all PCLL admission requirements if you intend to pursue the PCLL). The best approach is to enroll in courses which, in the aggregate, involve a similar number of weekly classroom contact hours as you would normally have at HKU. The study plan [form](#) can be downloaded from our Faculty homepage. On approval of your study plan, your application for credits transfer is also approved.

## Our LLB Requirements and Your Study Plan

7. In this regard, please note that while we may waive the sequence of courses to be taken under our LLB regulations, we have no power to waive the compulsory requirements. For the compulsory requirements, please refer to the updated [syllabus](#). You may take equivalents of most of the compulsory courses abroad as substitutes (see our [exchange webpage](#) for more information). Normally, we do not allow substitution for Constitutional Law and Land Law III, except perhaps for Land Law courses in Singapore.
8. In addition to the compulsory LLB courses, if you are intending to apply for admission to the PCLL, you will need to have completed the following additional courses to be eligible for admission: Evidence I, Business Associations and Land Law III. Should you wish to complete any of the compulsory requirements or PCLL pre-requisites while on exchange, you may refer to the list of courses we have approved / disapproved (see our [Exchange Webpage](#)).
9. If you are going to an Australian university for one year, you should take particular care in devising your study plan because of the difference in season. You will enroll in the second term of one academic year and in the first term of another academic year. This would make it very difficult for you to take a full year course, and the equivalent of our compulsory courses is usually offered only as full year course in

Australian universities.

If you are interested in going for exchange in a Civil Law country (Germany, Denmark, Switzerland or China), please note that most substantive law courses will only be treated as satisfying optional law requirements (law electives). For instance, if you study Criminal Law in China, this will NOT be treated as satisfying the compulsory Criminal Law requirement at HKU. Upon returning, you still need to take Criminal Law, though your load for law electives requirements will be lightened.

10. If you intend to go abroad on exchange for one year in your third year (LLB students) / fourth year (Integrated-Degree students), the compulsory capstone course (Mooting and Dispute Resolution) may present a problem. If you have already participated in a satisfactory substitute (see: [International Mooting](#)), you may be able to apply for replacement. If not, then you will need to defer the “Mooting and Dispute Resolution” requirement to your final year.
11. If you wish to be admitted to the Law Society of England & Wales in future, you may wish to take a course on European Law while you are on exchange. European Law is now a compulsory subject for anyone who wishes to take the English Law Society Final Exam or be admitted as a solicitor in England.

## **Study Plan and Leave of Absence**

12. Successful applicants are required to submit their study plans (see [Exchange Page](#)) to the Director of Exchange (Outgoing) (by email at [lawexchange@hku.hk](mailto:lawexchange@hku.hk)) at least 3-4 weeks before the host institution’s course enrolment deadline. Once they are admitted, they also have to apply to the Dean via the Head of Department for leave of absence.
13. It is your responsibility to ensure you are formally admitted to the host university and enrolled in the appropriate courses. It is also your responsibility to notify the Director of Exchange (Outgoing) if you intend to change or have changed your course selection after arriving at your host institution.

## **Degree and Honours Classification**

14. You must obtain an unconditional pass in each of the courses taken overseas for which credits are to be awarded and otherwise meet the standards set out by the host university. In this respect, you are bound by the rules of the host university regarding grading, grade appeals, supplementary examinations and other academic requirements.
15. Credit for successful completion of courses taken abroad will be noted on your HKU transcript, but not necessarily the precise results or name of the course. You may of

course provide future employers with any transcript you receive from the host university.

16. As a general rule, courses taken abroad will not be factored into the calculation of your Grade Point Average for classification of your degree. Accordingly, your cumulative GPA will not be lowered by taking courses abroad. The classification of your degree will in the first instance be based on the results of examinations taken at HKU only, and the HKU examination procedures will be applied *mutatis mutandis*. Your overseas results may also be taken into account in PCLL admission.
17. Please make sure that the host university sends official transcripts of your grades to us as soon as they are available. These must be official copies, and must be sent directly from the host university to our Faculty Office. You should also ask the host university to send us any information or explanation on the grades classification or its grade-mark conversion. Such information should reach us in good time and before mid-June, as delay in doing so may result in your not being able to graduate in time. It would be advisable to send us such explanation well before you take the examination.

## Summary

19. In summary, you should take the following steps:
  - (a) Study the relevant regulations;
  - (b) Find out more about the host university;
  - (c) Submit your exchange application (late November to January every year);
  - (d) Obtain course description and teaching hours from the visiting universities on all courses to be taken overseas;
  - (f) Submit your final study plan to the Director / Deputy Director of Exchange (Outgoing) via the Exchange Team by email at [lawexchange@hku.hk](mailto:lawexchange@hku.hk). The Study Plan form can be found on the Faculty website. The Director will also approve credit transfer;
  - (g) If you wish to apply for any variation in the normal course of study, this must be done in consultation with the Director of Exchange (Outgoing) for approval by the Head of the Department of Law and the Faculty of Law;
  - (h) Application for leave of absence should be addressed to the Head of Department of Law;
  - (i) If you wish to take PCLL Pre-requisites (Evidence I) overseas and plan to undertake the PCLL programme at HKU, please consult the list of approved / disapproval courses for reference.

If you are in need of further advice, please see your Academic Adviser and / or the Director of Exchange (Outgoing).

## Summer Programmes

20. In addition to exchanges during the academic year, students are encouraged to consider summer programmes. For summer programmes outside of the University of Hong Kong, prior approval is necessary for students desiring transfer of credits, with a maximum of 12 credits possible (the maximum load is 72 credits for each academic year). See appropriate form and application procedure on the [webpage](#).

## 8. INTERNATIONAL MOOTING

Mooting is the art and science of making written and oral legal arguments before a panel of judges. International mooting allows one to travel to far-away places to meet many interesting people, and to argue the latest issues in public and private international law. The Faculty of Law takes pride in its international mooting programme and has achieved outstanding results in the international competitions. For our recent success, please see:

<http://www.hk-lawyer.org/content/hku-moot-teams-celebrate-another-year-success>  
<https://www.hk-lawyer.org/content/round-applause-hku-moot-teams>

These achievements have only been possible because of the great enthusiasm and interest shown by HKU law students, right from their first year. Students are drawn to mooting mostly because it gives them a taste of the real practice of law, and it gives them the chance to put their legal knowledge and skills into real arguments in an actual competition. Many mooters will say just how exhilarating it is to try to persuade a court (even if it is not a real one) with arguments and submissions that they have come up with themselves. The mooting experience can substantially improve one's written and spoken English; it can build confidence in public speaking; it provides a more practical perspective to view one's legal studies. But perhaps the one reason that most, if not all, students give for becoming involved in international mooting is the chance to go overseas (with travel and accommodation support from the Faculty) and compete against moot teams from all over the world. It goes without saying that the skills and worldly experience acquired from international mooting definitely make a law student more marketable after graduation.

What can a first year student do to become involved in mooting? First, it would be a great idea to get more information from an upper year who has been through the mooting experience. Second, you can join the Advocacy and Mooting Society (AMS). The Society organises activities to help students train and prepare for moots. Thirdly, you should watch out for announcements regarding the international mooting competition selections usually held at the beginning of each academic year. Do not feel discouraged if you are not selected: practice makes perfect and you are welcome to apply again next year! If you have any questions about international mooting, you can contact Mr Tristan Wong ([wtristan@hku.hk](mailto:wtristan@hku.hk)), the Faculty's Mooting Coordinator.

## 9. STUDENT RESEARCHERS SCHEME

Students wishing to enhance their research skills by providing voluntary research assistance to teachers are invited enrol in this Scheme. If any teacher needs such assistance, he or she may contact a student enrolled in this Scheme.

Kindly note that:

- Participation in the Scheme does not carry any financial remuneration and is purely on a voluntary basis; and
- The scope for participation hinges on the demand for research assistance among teachers.

Interested students should submit their applications through [Student Intranet](#).

## 10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

From the Equal Opportunity Officer:

You may wish to note that the University is committed to creating, promoting and maintaining an environment for staff and students which provides equality of opportunity, which is free of any discrimination and harassment. It supports equal opportunity and strongly opposes discrimination/harassment. The University will take whatever action may be needed to prevent, and if necessary, discipline behaviour which violates its equal opportunity policy.

Specifically, our equal opportunity policy covers the following:

- Sex discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Disability discrimination/harassment/vilification
- Marital status discrimination
- Family status discrimination
- Pregnancy discrimination
- Racial discrimination/harassment
- Harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation

For details, you are welcome to contact us:

Website: [www.eounit.hku.hk/en](http://www.eounit.hku.hk/en)  
Tel.: 3917 1768  
Email: [eounit@hku.hk](mailto:eounit@hku.hk)  
Office: Room 107, 1/F Main Building, HKU.

Let us keep our campus discrimination free!