

REGULATIONS FOR THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN LAWS (PCLL)

These regulations apply to students admitted to the PCLL curriculum in the academic year 2025/2026 and thereafter.

(See also General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

PCLL1. Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL), a candidate

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
- (b) shall either
 - (i) hold a degree with at least a second class honours degree or equivalent in law¹ from a university or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; or
 - (ii) pass the Common Professional Examination or its equivalent of Hong Kong or of England and Wales and satisfy this University as to the candidate's competence in the required law subjects¹ provided that the candidate has also obtained a degree with at least a second class honours or equivalent in a discipline; and
- (c) if applying on the basis of a degree in law of a university or comparable institution other than this University, the City University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong under (b)(i) above, shall produce evidence of sufficient academic attainment and may be required to pass a qualifying examination; and
- (d) shall, notwithstanding General Regulation G2(b), achieve a band score in International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
 - (i) within a specified period before application for admission²; and
 - (ii) at the level that may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of the Faculty of Law.

¹ A candidate's degree must be in common law and will normally be from a Hong Kong or Commonwealth institution. A candidate must also demonstrate competence in the following required law subjects or subject areas (or subjects recognised as their equivalent): Constitutional law, Contract, Criminal law, Land law, Tort, Equity and Trusts, Evidence, Business Associations, Commercial Law, Hong Kong Constitutional Law, Hong Kong Legal System and Hong Kong Land Law.

² An IELTS band score is valid for three years.

PCLL2. Period of study

(a) The curriculum for the PCLL shall normally require (i) two semesters of full-time study, extending over not fewer than one academic year, or (ii) four semesters of part-time study, extending over not fewer than two academic years, and, in both cases, shall include any assessment to be held during each semester.

(b) Candidates shall not in any case be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration of (i) two academic years of full-time study or (ii) three academic years of part-time study, except with the approval of the Board of the Faculty of Law.

PCLL3. Curriculum requirements

(a) To complete the curriculum a candidate shall

(i) follow instructions and attend classes as required;

(ii) satisfactorily complete all coursework requirements including participating in such practical exercises and visits as may be organized as part of the curriculum; and

(iii) pass in courses totalling 72 credits in the manner specified as follows:

1. 45 credits of Compulsory Core Practice Areas;

2. 27 credits of Electives as selected by the candidate and approved by the Department of Professional Legal Education; and

(b) Full-time candidates must satisfactorily complete the curriculum within two consecutive semesters that they have registered, whereas part-time candidates shall satisfactorily complete the curriculum specified for the first year before being permitted to commence the curriculum for the second year.

PCLL4. Assessment

(a) Candidates shall be assessed for each of the courses for which they have registered, and assessment may be conducted in any combination of continuous assessment of coursework, written examinations and/or any other assessable activities. In each course, the examiners may take into account a candidate's performance in all aspects mentioned in PCLL3(a) above. Only passed courses will earn credits.

(b) Candidates suspended under Statute XXXI shall not be allowed to take, present themselves for, and participate in any assessments during the period of suspension, unless otherwise permitted by the Senate.

(c) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

PCLL5. Re-assessment, repeat and discontinuation

- (a) A candidate who has failed to pass in any course(s) for which he / she has registered at first attempt shall be permitted to attend a re-assessment / re-examination in the failed course(s).
- (b) Subject to the provisions of PCLL5(c) and (d),
 - (i) a full-time candidate who has failed to pass in any course and has attended a re-assessment / re-examination under PCLL5(a) without passing, the Board of Examiners shall recommend repeat of the curriculum and such candidate shall not be eligible for any mark of distinction.
 - (ii) a part-time candidate in his/her first or second year who has failed to pass in any course and has attended a re-assessment / re-examination under PCLL5(a) without passing, the Board of Examiners shall recommend repeat of the year and such candidate shall not be eligible for any mark of distinction.
- (c)
 - (i) A full-time candidate who, after repeating the curriculum pursuant to PCLL5(b)(i) has failed to pass in any course may be permitted to attend a re-assessment / re-examination.
 - (ii) A part-time candidate who, after repeating the relevant year of study pursuant to PCLL5(b)(ii), has failed to pass in any course of that year may be permitted to attend a re-assessment / re-examination.
- (d) A candidate who has
 - (i) attended the re-assessment / re-examination pursuant to PCLL5(c) without passing; or
 - (ii) exceeded the maximum period of registration specified in PCLL3(b),

shall be recommended discontinuation of studies unless otherwise permitted by the Board of the Faculty of Law to repeat pursuant to PCLL5(b).

PCLL6. Absence from examination

Candidates who are unable through illness to be present at any assessment pursuant to PCLL4(a) of any course may apply for permission to present themselves at a supplementary examination of the same course to be held before the beginning of the First Semester of the following academic year. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within seven calendar days of the first day of the candidate's absence from any examination. Any supplementary examination shall be part of that academic year's examinations as first attempt, and the provisions made in the regulations for failure at the first attempt pursuant to PCLL4 and PCLL5 shall apply accordingly.

PCLL7. Requirements for graduation

To be eligible for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws, candidates shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula, and complete the curriculum within the maximum period of registration as specified in these regulations and syllabuses of the curriculum.

PCLL8. Distinction

On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction for the whole examination as determined by the Board of Examiners, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidate's certificate.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN LAWS

STRUCTURE

Candidates are required to complete eight 9-credit courses, totalling 72 credits, including (i) 45 credits of compulsory core practice areas and (ii) 27 credits of electives in accordance with the regulations for this postgraduate certificate programme:

Compulsory Core Practice Areas

- . PCLL8010 Civil Litigation (9 credits)
- . PCLL8020 Corporate and Commercial Transactions (9 credits)
- . PCLL8030 Property Transactions I (9 credits)
- . PCLL8040 Professional Practice and Management (9 credits)
- . PCLL8050 Criminal Litigation (9 credits)

Electives Practice Areas

(Candidates are required to choose three practice areas from the list below)

- . PCLL8100 Trial Advocacy (9 credits)
- . PCLL8101 Commercial Dispute Resolution (9 credits)
- . PCLL8102 Personal Injury Litigation (9 credits)
- . PCLL8103 Matrimonial Practice and Procedure (9 credits)
- . PCLL8105 Drafting Commercial Agreements (9 credits)
- . PCLL8107 Listed Companies (9 credits)
- . PCLL8108 China Practice (9 credits)
- . PCLL8109 Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning (9 credits)
- . PCLL8110 Use of Chinese in Legal Practice (9 credits)
- . PCLL8111 Financial Regulations and Practice (9 credits)
- . PCLL8112 Employment Law and practice (9 credits)
- . PCLL8113 Property Practice (9 credits)

NOTE: Not all Elective Practice Areas may be offered in every academic year and a candidate may choose one only of areas which are taught on the same day. Places in each course are limited. In the event of over-subscription to a course, places will be awarded through ballot.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN LAWS

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

A. Compulsory Core Practice Areas

PCLL8010 Civil Litigation (9 credits)

Conduct of civil cases involving knowledge and application of the underlying procedural rules (including introduction to alternative dispute resolution) and, in the context of proceedings, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, case analysis, legal research and writing, communication skills, client care and interviewing, conferencing, drafting (including pleadings and affidavits), case preparation and pre-trial advocacy.

Assessment: 70% Civil Procedure and Litigation (3.5% Client interviewing*; Final examinations: 66.5%), 30% Civil Advocacy* (30% Final oral assessment by external assessors)

* *Client interviewing and Civil Advocacy are oral assessments.*

PCLL8020 Corporate and Commercial Transactions (9 credits)

Overview of corporate practice and the basics of commercial transactions including: incorporation and operation of a private limited company, analysis of a shareholders' agreement, understanding and interpretation of financial statements of a company, bank financing and purchase of businesses and shares in a private company; and, in such contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving and document analysis.

Assessment: 100% Final examinations

PCLL8030 Property Transactions (9 credits)

Overview and the conduct of a typical property transaction and, in such context, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of title investigation, problem solving and legal research and writing. Succession to property (including analysis of wills and procedure for application for grants) will also be covered.

Assessment: 20% Assessment I, 80% Final examination

PCLL8040 Professional Practice and Management (9 credits)

Professional codes of conduct for solicitors (Solicitors' Guide of Professional Conduct) and barristers (the Bar Code), ethical questions, as well as various Practice Rules and Practice Directions governing relationships with clients, courts and other members of the legal profession and issues relating to client care.

Assessment: 12% Accounts assessment, 88% Final examination (Professional conduct components)

PCLL8050 Criminal Litigation (9 credits)

Conduct of criminal cases involving knowledge and application of the underlying procedural rules and, in the context of proceedings, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, case analysis, communication skills, client care and interviewing, conferencing, legal research and writing (including advice/opinion on pre-trial issues and/or grounds of appeal), case preparation and non-trial advocacy focusing on bail applications and pleas in mitigation. Professional conduct and ethics are pervasively taught throughout the course.

Assessment: 50% Criminal Procedure and Litigation (18% Coursework, 32% Final examination), 50% Criminal Advocacy (15% Bail Application, 30% Plea in Mitigation, 5% Written court report)

**Bail Application and Plea in Mitigation are oral assessments*

B. Elective Practice Areas

(Candidates are required to choose three Elective Practice Areas from the list below. Not all Elective Practice Areas may be offered in every academic year and a candidate may choose one only of areas which are taught on the same day. Places in each course are limited. In the event of over-subscription to a course, places will be awarded through ballot.)

PCLL8100 Trial Advocacy (9 credits)

The conduct and process of trials. The course includes the analysis of case papers followed by preparation for and conduct of trials, incorporating the delivery of legal submissions, addresses to judge and jurors, the examination of witnesses and management of case exhibits, all in accordance with the applicable law, procedure, evidential rules and professional ethics. The course focuses on intensive practice sessions with both live and recorded reviews of opening address, closing address, examination and cross examination of witnesses including expert witnesses. It concludes with a mock trial and assessments held at the High Court.

Assessment: 25% Opening, 25% Examination-in-chief, 25% Cross-examination, 25% Closing

** All four are oral assessments.*

PCLL8101 Commercial Dispute Resolution (9 credits)

The conduct of resolving commercial disputes, in the context of two case studies: (1) a multi-party contractual dispute; and (2) a shareholder dispute leading to winding-up of a company or an application under the unfair prejudice regime of the Companies Ordinance. In addition to building on their contentious skills from the Civil Litigation component of PCLL 8010, students will be introduced to arbitration and mediations. Students will carry out practical exercises using the skills of problem solving, interviewing, fact investigation, document analysis, conferencing and advising, drafting (including complex pleadings, memoranda, letters of advice, affidavits, and case summaries for use in mediation) and advocacy. Students will also practise negotiation skills in teams in a mock mediation, facilitated by an accredited mediator.

Assessment: 30% Mediation skills* and Mediation report; 70% Drafting assessments; Advocacy exercise* (*Pass/Fail basis*)

* *Mediation skills and Advocacy exercise are oral assessments.*

PCLL8102 Personal Injury Litigation (9 credits)

The conduct of personal injury litigation including an employees' compensation case and common law negligence cases and, in such contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, interviewing, document analysis, drafting (special pleadings and witness statements, conferencing, advising and opinion writing.

Assessment: 25% Assessment I, 75% Final examination

PCLL8103 Matrimonial Practice and Procedure (9 credits)

The conduct of all the major substantive areas of practice in matrimonial proceedings in the Family Court (District Court) and in the High Court, including marriage and divorce, child advocacy and children dispute resolution rules, custody care and control, financial orders (ancillary relief), family dispute resolution procedure, pre-nuptial agreements, Hague Conventions (child abduction), family mediation, injunctions and domestic violence, enforcement and appeals, in such contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, interviewing, conferencing and advising, negotiation and mediation, document analysis, and drafting, court documents.

Assessment: 50% Oral assessment, 50% Final examination

PCLL8105 Drafting Commercial Agreements (9 credits)

Introduction to the drafting of agreements in commercial and corporate transactions including drafting a typical sale and purchase agreement, a joint venture agreement, and an agreement for the acquisition of shares in a private company, and the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, document analysis and agreement drafting.

Assessment: 100% Final examinations

PCLL8107 Listed Companies (9 credits)

Introduction to the Listing Rules including the procedures of listing, continuing obligations of listed companies, and transactions involving listed companies, introduction to the Securities and Futures Ordinance with a focus on disclosure of interest and market misconduct, and introduction to the Takeovers Code and, in such contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, document analysis, advising and letter writing.

Assessment: 10% Class participation, 90% Final examination

PCLL8108 China Practice (9 credits)

Introduction to PRC law and practices in property and land transactions, company law, mergers and acquisitions and joint ventures, and in such contexts, the carrying out practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, legal research, letter writing, document analysis and document drafting.

Assessment: 20% Drafting exercise, 80% Final examination

PCLL8109 Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning (9 credits)

Introduction to estate planning and use of inter vivos gifts, insurance policies, trusts and wills in serving planning purposes and, in such contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, legal research, letter writing, document analysis and document drafting (including wills and trust deeds). Other procedural and practical aspects of non-contentious Probate Practice including application for grants and administration of estates will also be covered.

Assessment: 10% Client interviewing*, 20% Wills drafting assessment, 5% Course work Fact-finding Exercise, 30% Group written advice summary & presentation*, 35% Final examination
* *Client interviewing and Group presentation are oral assessments.*

PCLL8110 Use of Chinese in Legal Practice (9 credits)

This subject aims at developing the Chinese verbal and written communication skills required for legal practice. Enrolment is limited to those who have not taken Use of Chinese in Law I (LLAW3055) and/or Use of Chinese in Law II (LLAW3004) under the LLB programme. It will be taught in Chinese (Cantonese) and applicants may be required to complete a pre-class aptitude test for screening purposes.

The course aims to introduce students to the ever-increasing use of Chinese in various aspects of legal practice. The course will begin with an introduction to the use of English-Chinese law dictionaries and glossaries of legal terms. It will then examine the characteristics of the Chinese language as well as those of the legal language. Students will be asked to draft Chinese legal documents, translate English legal documents into Chinese, interact with and render legal advice to lay clients in Chinese in specific settings, and conduct negotiation in Chinese.

Assessment: 50% for 3 Written assignments (25%) and Client interviewing assessment (25%)*, 50% Final examination
* *Client interviewing is an oral assessment.*

PCLL8111 Financial Regulations and Practice (9 credits)

The conduct of understanding, advising and handling financial regulatory disputes with and investigations by law enforcement agencies in Hong Kong such as the Securities and Futures Commission (“SFC”), the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (“HKMA”) and the Hong Kong

Exchanges and Clearing Limited (“HK Stock Exchange”) and the relevant proceedings brought by these regulatory authorities.

Students will learn, in a litigation and dispute resolution context, how to interpret, explain and analyse the relevant ordinances, codes of conduct, rules and practices governing financial regulations in Hong Kong, including the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571), the Codes of Conduct and Rules issued by the SFC, the HKMA and the HK Stock Exchange and apply such legal knowledge and practices to real-life situations concerning regulatory authorities’ investigations, regulatory breaches and related disciplinary, civil and criminal proceedings, and legal practitioners’ practical handling of such regulatory investigations and proceedings on their clients’ behalf.

Assessment: 35% Written coursework assignment; 35% Interviewing, conference and advisory skills assessment*; 30% Final examination

* *Interviewing, conference and advisory skills assessment is an oral assessment.*

PCLL 8112 Employment Law and Practice (9 credits)

This course examines the substantive employment law as defined by both common law and statutory rights, and the practice and procedure relating to the formation, operation, and termination of the employment relationship. Students will also be introduced to the practice and procedure associated with the handling and resolution of typical employment disputes including matters at the Labour Department, before the Labour Tribunal and the civil courts and claims under the four anti-discrimination ordinances.

Topics covered include defining the employment relationship, the rights and duties of the employee and employer, the contract of employment, health and safety in the workplace, disciplinary issues, employment discrimination, bringing the employment relationship to an end and post-employment issues. The course does not cover trade unions, collective bargaining regimes and the employees’ compensation system.

Assessment: 30% Interviewing and conference skills assessment*, 70% Final examination

* *Interviewing and conference skills assessment is an oral assessment.*

PCLL8113 Property Practice (9 credits)

Introduction into significant aspects of property practice including disputes between vendor and purchaser over a sale and purchase agreement of interests in land, issues between landlord and tenant, legal aspects for sales under the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales Ordinance) (Cap. 621), compulsory sales under Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance (Cap 545), inheritance disputes, and disputes concerning management of buildings. In the aforesaid contexts, the carrying out of practical exercises involving the skills of problem solving, drafting of pleadings and affidavits, advocacy, and opinion writing.

Assessment: 70% Graded assignment, 30% Final examination