# Programme Specification: Executive LLM

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| **1.** | **Awarding Body** | LSE |
| **2.** | **Details of accreditation by a professional/statutory body,  e.g. ESRC; BPS etc** | Contact hours on the modules will count as continuing professional education hours for the Bar Council and the Law Society. The Law Department is an accredited provider in this |
| **3.** | **Name of final award** | Executive LLM (E-LLM) |
| **4.** | **Programme Title** | Executive LLM |
| **5.** | **Duration of the course** | Minimum of 3 years, maximum of 4. |
| **6.** | **Based in the Department/Institute:** | Law |
| **7.** | **Relevant QAA subject benchmark statements** | N/A |
| **8.** | **UCAS Code** | N/A |
| **9.** | **First written/last amended** | April 2011 |

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| **10.** | **The programme aims to:** |
| * To provide high quality teaching to high quality students who not only have a strong academic background, but who also bring context and experience to the class room. We expect that this will generate a high level of class discussion. It may also provide teachers with access to current market practice and legal developments in multiple jurisdictions.      * To provide a flexible means of delivering our LLM programme to people in full-time employment, without compromising on quality of the student body or on the quality of the student experience or our high expectations of student output. * To access the pool of postgraduate students that our programmes are currently incapable of reaching because they cannot take a full-time programme. * To contribute to the School’s aims of fully utilising our teaching spaces and resources outside of our normal teaching times. * To enable all aspects of the Department to develop closer links with the practice and application of the law which we teach. We believe this programme may be relevant to the Department’s Research Excellence Framework (REF) impact assessment. * To provide students with a significant degree of choice in the legal subjects they wish to study.   To enable students to undertake the advanced study of law in the chosen field.    To enable students either to take a broad cross section of unrelated modules or to build up a portfolio of knowledge and understanding in specialist areas such as, for example, international law, corporate law or financial regulation.    To enable students to study amongst a peer group of practising lawyers; to enable learning from both the teacher and the materials but also from each other.  To facilitate students oral articulation of ideas and arguments through participation in class discussion and group work.  To develop common law legal skills, including the identification of the rules and principles articulated in case law and the common law approach to statutory interpretation.  To enable students to gain a comparative legal perspective, to understand legal variation in the chosen areas of study, and to develop an understanding of the historical, political and policy considerations explaining such legal variation.  To enable students to take an interdisciplinary approach to the study of law: drawing on other disciplines to understand the form that law takes and its social, political implications. | |
| **11.** | **Programme outcomes: knowledge and understanding; skills and other attributes** |
| Students completing the programme will be able to demonstrate:  An advanced substantive understanding of their chosen areas of study. Both an understanding of the applicable law but also an understanding of the context within which law has developed and been applied.    An advanced understanding of the method of common law legal reasoning.  The ability in written form to make clear and well structured arguments.  The ability to identify legal issues from legal problem questions and to be able to show how legal argument can be marshalled to address such identified problems.  The ability to orally articulate legal and policy arguments in class discussion. | |

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| **12.** | **Teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated** |
| **Teaching and learning strategies:**  The substantive subject matter of the modules will be very similar to the corresponding modules currently taught on the existing LLM degree. Two important differences must be noted. First the nature of the audience must be taken into account. The student body will be older, more confident and often with significant work experience in the area of study. This may, depending on the composition of the student body, allow the modules to be taught at a more advanced level. It will be a challenge for teachers to ensure that the knowledge and insight of the experienced students is brought into class discussion while at the same time ensuring that less experienced students are not left behind in the discussion.  The intensive modules will involve 24-26 hours of contact time (over five days on an intensive week and over four days on two intensive weekends). This is longer than the current 20 hours of contact time for a current half module on the existing LLM. The additional time creates more space for in class group work and group presentations. Such break-out groups will present an important learning opportunity but also break up what is inevitably a very intensive teaching period. We intend to run the intensive five-day modules over a six-day period, in order to have a rest day in the middle, to enable the students to read for the remaining part of the course and for teacher and students to recharge their batteries. A typical course would start on Sunday, with a free day on Wednesday and finish on Friday.  In the event that any module is run with over 30 students we will follow current practice on the existing LLM and run the class in lecture / small group format, with 22 hours of lecture time and four hours of small group seminars. We aim not to teach through this approach if possible. The programme has a strong 24-26 hour seminar preference. We would expect to follow the 22+4 format only where student demand for a module is well in excess of 30. Students will be informed in the Handbook and the induction that the presumptive mode of delivery will be the 30 student seminar, but that the 22+4 format may be used if module demand is very high. They will be informed two months prior to taking the module if, due to high demand, the mode of delivery changes to the 22+4 format.  If a seminar fails to attract interest from more than five students, the module will not be run. Students will be informed two months prior to the course running if the module is cancelled for lack of interest. Students will be notified of this risk in the student handbook and the issue will be flagged in Induction.  If a seminar runs for the first time with less than 10 students, the module convenor will be asked to consider a restructuring and rebranding of the module. If the module fails to attract more than 10 students the second time it is offered it will be automatically discontinued. Modules attracting between 10-15 students will be encouraged to think about possible ways of restructuring the course to make it more attractive. We would expect such lower demand modules to be offered less frequently than other modules, typically only twice in a four year period.  The Programme Director will meet with each teacher of a module prior to delivery to discuss teaching strategy. Two teaching strategies will be stressed:   * First seminars should involve a significant amount of class discussion and interaction; * Second, group work to consider hypotheticals or policy issues should be considered as part of the 24-26 hours   Professor David Kershaw, who will initially be responsible for the programme, has experience of teaching intensive week-long modules at the University of Melbourne. This and other staff members’ experience (Tom Poole, Sarah Worthington and Michael Bridge have all taught such intensive modules) will be passed on to teachers who are teaching in this format for the first time.  The Programme Director will hold reviews with all teachers after the completion of the module to discuss the class feedback and teacher experience. Useful ideas and experience will be passed on to all Executive LLM staff.  All modules will be Moodle-ised. In addition to this a course pack of the Moodle materials and the required texts will be sent to the students. We envisage incorporating these costs into the costs of the degree. The Moodle websites and the course materials will be sent to the students no later that two months prior to the module commencing. Steve Ryan of the Centre for Learning Technology (CLT) has been contacted with regard to the programme and will be extensively consulted on the use of Moodle and other online teaching tools following GSSC approval.  **Induction**  As students will be able to start to the programme at any time during the year when a module is offered, we require a more flexible approach to induction than under the current full-time LLM. Every time a module is held the students will be asked to meet with the Programme Manager beforehand, who will provide students with basic information about the programme, including a the Executive LLM handbook. Prior to the commencement of each session on the Sunday or Monday (depending on the start date) at 9am an induction session for all new students will be held with either the Programme Director or Assistant Programme Directors. This induction session will provide background information on the Executive LLM, the intensive module approach, and the assessment strategy. In addition to this we will place some introductory vodcasts on the programme’s Moodle site. These (separate) vodcasts will address: general programme information; legal education in the United Kingdom; the common law method; legal research; and basic tips on studying at LSE.  **Assessment strategies:**  As the modules are taken intensively with students flying in for the week, our view is that a sit-down examination is not practical. Students would have to fly in again to take the exam which is both expensive and time consuming for the student, but also a poor use of revision time in the run up to the exam. Using LSE exam centres in multiple countries (assuming one is available in every country) is not in our view practical.  The modules will therefore be assessed by either an extended essay or a take-home examination.  Dissertation Option  The degree will not offer a supervised dissertation option.  The Extended Essay  To fulfil LSE’s writing requirement students will be required to write a least one 8,000 essay as the assessment for one of the taken modules. Where a student completes an extended essay for the course she/he will NOT take the take-home examination.  Students will be allowed to write a maximum of two 8,000 essays in fulfilment of the degree or diploma requirements (one for the certificate). Concerns about plagiarism and “the student’s own work”, as well as ensuring that students demonstrate their ability to produce quality work under time pressure to obtain the degree, support this two-essay rule. Students will have two months from the end of the intensive module to complete the essay. The student will be required to upload their completed essay to Moodle. Essay titles will be provided by the teacher of the module although students will be able to agree a different title with the teacher.  Take-Home Exams  The take-home exam is the Executive LLM’s primary form of assessment. LSE as a whole has limited experience with take-home exams although a take-home was recently trialled successfully by the Department of International Development. Note has been taken of their experience in this regard, and David Kershaw has spoken to Professor Allen to discuss his experience of the take-home exam format.  Other leading law schools use the take-home format as the primary means of assessment for both full-time and part-time students (the US Ivy league schools for example make widespread use of take-home exams as does Melbourne University). However, take-homes do present some challenges which we address below.   * The Executive LLM take-home exam for each module will be held on the weekend closest to two calendar months after the end of the teaching session for the module. There is no annual examination period for all modules on the degree so the timetabling issues faced by the Department of International Development with their take-home exam are not a problem for this programme. An examination date will be set and publicised with the publication of module availability. Accordingly, when the student selects the module the student can diarise both for the course and the exam. Students will be required to acknowledge when they register for the course that they have noted the exam date. Students clearly need time to prepare for the exam and as the Executive LLM students will be in full-time work the exam date cannot be too close to the end of the module. At the same time the exam date must be close enough to the end of the module so that the face–to-face learning experience does not become a distant memory. Melbourne’s intensive modularised LLM schedules a date which is approximately eight weeks after the end of the module. This appears to work effectively and from LSE law staff’s (Michael Bridge, David Kershaw, Tom Poole and Sarah Worthington) experience of the Melbourne LLM results in the production of very high quality work.      * The time period options for the take-home will either be eight hours or 48 hours. Having consulted with students at US law schools who have taken take-home exams it appears that in some US Law Schools it became commonplace to set 12 hour and 24 hour take homes. However, recently there has been a move to longer exam periods as the 12 and 24 hour time periods placed excessive strain on students as they worked through without taking a break. A 48 hour examination on the other hand gives the students enough time to take breaks. * A well drafted take-home exam is an excellent means of assessment. It can set a very high standard of question (both problem questions and essay question). However, if the take-home is simply a sit-down exam with more time it does not fulfil its objective. It is important, therefore, that teachers who have no experience of setting and marking take-home exams are given help and guidance in this process. The Programme Director and the Assistant Programme Directors will proactively offer advice in this regard and closely monitor the nature and standard of all exams. All law exams should contain a mix of problems and essays unless the Programme Director agrees otherwise. Problem questions in particular render plagiarism and “buy-in” of the exam product very difficult, as does the time limit of the exam (as compared to a two-month assessed essay). * Process - Two days before the exam start date students will be sent an email reminder that the exam will be available to be downloaded from Moodle on the following Saturday morning at 9am. The exam answer must be uploaded to Moodle by the set time. Note that the Department of International Development used Moodle to make the take-home exam available and to collect completed scripts. The Programme Director or an Assistant Programme Director and the Programme Manager will be available by email or phone during the examination period. Students will be provided with all relevant contact details. All students will be required to be online during the examination period in case there is any need to contact them. * Requests to defer exams will be treated on the same basis as under the existing LLM. If deferral is granted the student will sit the exam set when the course is next offered. If the course is not offered in the following year, arrangements will be made to set an exam a year following the first exam. If a resit exam is set then, at the Programme Director’s discretion, the student may be offered the opportunity to sit the resit exam. * Students will be able to resit the module examination once. A resit will be set two to three months after the student is notified of the failure following the exam board. * Students with disabilities will, as far as possible, be treated in the same way as under the current rules. For example, students with dyslexia will receive 20% more time. Take-home exams in and of themselves address several disability issues such as taking breaks and use of computers. * One exam board for the executive LLM will be held each year, in November.   Formative Assessment  Students will be required to produce a formative test exam question of 1,500 words to be submitted via Moodle one month from the end of the module’s teaching session. Written feedback will be provided and uploaded onto moodle within two weeks of submission. | |

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| **13.** | **Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules and awards** |
| A degree is obtained by completing eight half units. All modules offered are half units.  The programme provides for earlier exit points: a certificate can be obtained on the completion of four modules and a diploma on the completion of six modules. We consider that these additional exit points will both provide an incentive for students in full-time employment to take more modules but also allow students who discover that they cannot find sufficient time for the whole degree to leave with some form of acknowledgement of their achievements and learning at LSE. The degree will not be available with specialisms as it is under the existing full time LLM.  See Executive [LLM programme](http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar/programmeRegulations/taughtMasters/2014_ExecutiveLLM.htm) regulations. | |

**Additional information**

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| **14.** | **Criteria for admission to the programme** |
| Admission Criteria:   1. A first degree in law (LLB or equivalent) with a grade of 66% (or equivalent). In exceptional circumstances applicants with a first degree in another discipline may be eligible for consideration; AND 2. At least three years of post-degree (qualifying law degree) work experience (in law, government, regulatory bodies, NGOs, business).   An application should include the following:   * Two confidential academic references * A reference from the current or last employer * A transcript of your previous studies * An English language test (TOEFL or IELTS) – *if applicable* * Application fee * Personal statement   In evaluating an application, the selectors will take into consideration an applicant’s grades and class rank, letters of reference, the coherence of an applicant’s proposed programme of study, professional accomplishments and the nature and extent of the applicant’s post-degree work experience.  Once admitted to the programme the student is eligible to take the next round of offered modules. Ie., there is no annual admission point.  Admission's will be handled in the usual way with Graduate Admissions forwarding the admissions to the Programme Manager who will distribute the applications to the staff members responsible for the admissions decisions. One of Assistant Directors is responsible for admissions. Other members of staff will also be involved in the admissions process.  The current admissions form will have to be slightly tailored for the E-LLM to foreground the prior employment requirement. An application fee will be payable. We will consult with ARD about the pricing of this fee.  We have consulted with ARD (Simeon Underwood) about the proposal and will work very closely with ARD in the run up to commencing admissions in September 2012.  No financial support for students is currently provided for. If the programme is successful we envisage using some of the generated funds to create financial support for the Executive LLM which will be aimed in particular at lower income groups. Such arrangements would be subject to the Law Department's Strategic Planning Committee approval. | |

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| **15.** | **Indicators of quality** |
| Last year (2010/11) over 2,000 applicants competed for 264 places on the LLM programme. Admission is highly selective. Over 300 applicants competed for approximately 30 places on the MSc in Law and Accounting.  The LSE Law Department received the highest ranking in the country in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008. 75% of our research was rated either world-class or of international renown. We are the top research university in law, whether that assessment is based either on the grade point average or the proportion of publications winning the accolade of 4\*. | |

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| **16.** | **Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standard of teaching and learning** |
| All module teachers will meet in advance of the module with the Programme Director to discuss reading materials, teaching delivery and assessment. Following the completion of the module teaching, the Programme Director will meet with the teacher to discuss the module student evaluations and teacher input. General tips and experiences will be shared with other teachers. Periodic meeting will be held with the group of Executive LLM teachers to discuss issues arising from the programme.  The take-home assessment will be reviewed by the Programme Director and the Assistant Programme Directors to ensure that the take-home is of the correct standard and reasonable in terms of time expectation and any word limits for the questions.  A co-ordinating group consisting of the Head of Department (HoD), the Programme Director of the LLM (full time), the Departmental Manager and the Programme Director of the Executive LLM and the Programme Manager will be formed to consider problems and ideas about developments arising on both LLMs; to ensure that such problems and ideas are shared and addressed consistently.  The Programme Director of the Executive LLM is appointed by the HoD. The Programme Director of the Executive LLM will produce an annual report on the Executive LLM detailing, among others, student demand, student satisfaction and teacher experience and satisfaction. This report will be made available to the Teaching Committee and the Departmental Meeting for note and discussion. | |