

**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
LEGAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2024**

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

(1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024)

This is the nineteenth annual report of the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training (“SCLET”). Section 74A of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap. 159) providing for the establishment of SCLET and its functions is at Annexure 1.

Meetings

1. SCLET met on four occasions during the reporting period from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (“Reporting Period”). Its composition is at Annexure 2.

Major Matters Dealt with by SCLET

Introduction of additional subjects for LLB, JD and PCLL Conversion Examination

2. As previously reported¹, the Department of Justice (“DoJ”) proposed to discuss whether to introduce compulsory courses for Bachelor of Laws (“LLB”) and Juris Doctor (“JD”) students on the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and national security laws as well as including them into the syllabus of the PCLL Conversion Examination (“Conversion Examination”). The DoJ also proposed to discuss whether to offer more elective courses for LLB and JD students in support of Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address of developing Hong Kong into the Eight Centres².
3. The proposals were discussed, on a preliminary basis, at SCLET meetings held on 9 November 2023 and 22 February 2024. Thereafter, the DoJ and the respective law schools of The University of Hong Kong (“HKU”), City University of Hong Kong (“CityU”) and The Chinese University of Hong Kong (“CUHK”) further discussed among themselves on the proposals. By the time this matter was discussed at SCLET meeting of 25 April 2024, there was consensus among the DoJ and the three law schools that the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the national security law³ be compulsorily covered in their LLB and JD programmes. As to whether the national security law would be a separate subject, the three law schools

¹ See paragraphs 10 to 12 of the 2023 Annual Report.

² The Eight Centres are International Financial Centre, International Innovation and Technology Centre, East-meets-West Centre for International Cultural Exchange, International Trade Centre, International Shipping Centre, International Aviation Hub, Centre for International Legal and Dispute Resolution Services in the Asia Pacific Region and Regional Intellectual Property Trading Centre.

³ National security law includes the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, and other related national security laws.

would monitor the teaching of this subject in the LLB and JD programmes and report to SCLET upon completion of the 2024/2025 academic year. There was also a consensus that the three law schools would as far as practicable and try their best to offer elective courses⁴ in their LLB, JD and postgraduate programmes every academic year to meet the demand of developing Hong Kong into the Eight Centres, and report to SCLET on the implementation upon completion of the 2024/2025 academic year. The focuses of discussion at the meeting of 25 April 2024 were whether SCLET should give any direction to the PCLL Conversion Examination Board to include the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the national security law in the syllabus of the Conversion Examination and whether they would constitute stand-alone subjects for the Conversion Examination. One observation was that these two subjects were already examined in the Conversion Examination and a direction from SCLET might not be necessary. Another observation was that, unlike local students in LLB and JD programmes who would be taught on these subjects, those taking the Conversion Examination were not educated on these subjects in their overseas legal studies and hence, they might face difficulties in preparing for them. At the end of the meeting, the Chairman requested Members to study the coverage of the two subjects in the existing syllabus of the Conversion Examination.

4. At the SCLET meeting of 25 July 2024, the DoJ observed that both the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the national security law were already covered in the existing syllabi, reading lists and examination papers of the subjects “Hong Kong Constitutional Law” and “Hong Kong Legal System” of the Conversion Examination. Subject to an update regarding the recently enacted Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (“SNSO”)⁵, the DoJ had no objection to the existing arrangements and that a direction from SCLET to the Conversion Examination Board would not be necessary. It is noted that the SNSO had since then been included in the syllabi of the said two subjects.

Comprehensive Study on Legal Education and Training

5. SCLET continued to consider the Final Report of the Consultants on the Comprehensive Review of Legal Education and Training in Hong Kong. Two major outstanding issues remain, namely, the Law Society’s proposals for (i) the Common Entrance Examination (“CEE”) and (ii) the Law Society Examination (“LSE”). Both of them, if and when implemented, will have ramifications on the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (“PCLL”) programmes currently provided by the three law schools.
6. As previously reported⁶, as far as the CEE is concerned, the Law Society wished to ensure uniformity of standards by requiring all PCLL graduates, who do not sit a common examination at present, to undertake the CEE before entering into a training contract. However, as SCLET understands it, the Law Society has no immediate plan on pushing ahead with the CEE.

⁴ The elective courses are Law on technology or Artificial intelligence, Private International Law, Public International Law, Insurance Law, Financial Law, Maritime Law, Aviation Law, Intellectual Property Law and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

⁵ The Safeguarding National Security Ordinance came into force on 23 March 2024.

⁶ See paragraphs 3 and 4 of the 2023 Annual Report.

7. The other proposal, the LSE, may have a more substantial impact on entrants to the solicitors' branch of the legal profession and legal education in general. Currently, the three law schools provide a total of about 685 PCLL places (full time and part-time). These places are available to law graduates, local or overseas, who wish to enter into the legal profession in Hong Kong. SCLET was informed by the Law Society that it is of the view that because the PCLL places are limited, some suitably qualified law graduates have been unable to enter the solicitors' branch of the legal profession.
8. As previously reported⁷, the Law Society submitted a draft Report on LSE ("**draft Report**") to SCLET on 11 February 2022. There were continued discussions of the draft Report at SCLET's meetings during the Reporting Period.
9. Shortly before the SCLET meeting on 22 February 2024, the Bar Association provided its response to the LSE proposal raising concerns on various matters such as the need for the LSE, its details as well as its potential impact on the extant PCLL courses and the barristers' profession, etc.
10. At the SCLET meeting on 22 February 2024, the concerns raised by the Bar Association were shared by some of the law schools. The representatives of the Law Society informed SCLET that the Bar Association's response was being considered by the Legal Education Committee of the Law Society and that it would come back to the Bar Association or SCLET to report on the suggested way forward.
11. Subsequent to the SCLET meeting on 22 February 2024, the respective representatives of the Law Society and the Bar Association met on 20 March 2024. The Law Society provided further response to the Bar Association's response to the LSE proposal on 11 April 2024 and that the latter provided its comments on 23 April 2024, two days before the SCLET meeting scheduled on 25 April 2024.
12. The above-mentioned further response from the Law Society and comments from the Bar Association were discussed at the SCLET meeting held on 25 April 2024. In response to questions raised at the meeting concerning the accuracy of some of the statistics quoted in the Law Society's further response, the Law Society wrote to the three law schools in early May 2024 for various statistics surrounding PCLL admission.
13. The statistics provided by the law schools were discussed generally at the SCLET meetings of 25 July 2024 and 26 September 2024. While SCLET awaits the Law Society's comments on the statistics, the Law Society was invited to clarify to SCLET the reasons for introducing the LSE after considering the figures.
14. Up to the end of the Reporting Period, the Law Society had not submitted further response on the LSE proposal. SCLET shall continue to discuss the draft Report and endeavour to bring our deliberation to a conclusion and make known our stance on the Law Society's proposals as soon as possible.

⁷ See paragraphs 6 and 7 of the 2022 Annual Report.

LLB, JD and PCLL Programmes

15. SCLET continued to monitor the following legal education programmes:
 - (a) the LLB, JD and PCLL programmes of CityU. The reports are at Annexure 3;
 - (b) the LLB, JD and PCLL programmes of CUHK. The reports are at Annexure 4; and
 - (c) the LLB, JD and PCLL programmes of HKU. The reports are at Annexure 5.
16. A table consolidating the key statistics of the LLB, JD and PCLL programmes of the three Law Schools is at Annexure 6.

PCLL Conversion Examination

17. The Conversion Examination Board met on two occasions during the Reporting Period to oversee the administration of the Conversion Examination. Matters considered by the Conversion Examination Board in the meetings and by paper circulation included the following:
 - (a) Applications for exemption from sitting the Conversion Examination;
 - (b) Applications for special arrangements for sitting the Conversion Examination;
 - (c) Examination results, statistics and examiners' reports;
 - (d) Chief Examiner's decisions on the appeals against examination results;
 - (e) Review of syllabi and book lists; and
 - (f) Finances of the Conversion Examination Board.
18. The number of candidates who took part in the Conversion Examinations in eight different prerequisite subjects in January and June 2024 were 418 and 381 respectively as compared to 379 and 392 candidates respectively in the January and June 2023 Conversion Examinations.
19. The average passing rate of the subjects examined in January 2024 was 56.88% (as compared to 50.5% in the January 2023 results) and that in June 2024 was 55.25% (as compared to 51.63% in the June 2023 results).
20. The composition of the Conversion Examination Board is at Annexure 7.

Chairmanship

21. SCLET is chaired by Mr. Justice Robert Tang.

Overall position

22. Various stakeholders in the field of legal education and training contributed their views from different perspectives and the meetings of SCLET have provided a useful forum for the exchange of views on different issues.

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Annexure 1

SECTION 74A OF THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ORDINANCE

74A. Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training

- (1) There is established by this section a Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training.
- (2) The functions of the committee are-
 - (a) to keep under review, evaluate and assess-
 - (i) the system and provision of legal education and training in Hong Kong;
 - (ii) without prejudice to the generality of subparagraph (i), the academic requirements and standards for admission to the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws programme;
 - (b) to monitor the provision of vocational training of prospective legal practitioners in Hong Kong by organizations other than the Society or the Hong Kong Bar Association;
 - (c) to make recommendations on matters referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b); and
 - (d) to collect and disseminate information concerning the system of legal education and training in Hong Kong.
- (3) The committee shall consist of-
 - (a) 17 members appointed by the Chief Executive of whom- (Amended 10 of 2005, s.184)
 - (i) 2 shall be persons nominated by the Chief Justice;
 - (ii) 1 shall be a person nominated by the Secretary for Justice;
 - (iii) 1 shall be a person nominated by the Secretary for Education (Amended L.N. 130 of 2007);
 - (iv) 2 shall be persons nominated by the Society;
 - (v) 2 shall be persons nominated by the Hong Kong Bar Association;

- (vi) 2 shall be persons nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong;
 - (vii) 2 shall be persons nominated by the President of the City University of Hong Kong;
 - (viii) 2 shall be persons nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hong Kong; (Added 10 of 2005 s.184)
 - (ix) 2 shall be members of the public; and
 - (x) 1 shall be a person nominated by the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education, a non-profit-making educational organization, from among its members which provide continuing legal education courses in Hong Kong; and (Amended 18 of 2014 s. 159)
- (b) a chairman appointed by the Chief Executive after consultation with the persons and organizations making nominations pursuant to paragraph (a)(i) to (viii) and (x). (Amended 10 of 2005 s.184)
- (4) A member of the committee who is unable to attend a meeting of the committee, except for a member appointed pursuant to subsection (3)(a)(viii), may, subject to the consent of the chairman, send a substitute to attend the meeting in his place and the substitute shall be deemed to be a member of the committee for the purpose of that meeting.
 - (5) A member of the committee including the chairman shall hold office for a term not exceeding 2 years.
 - (6) A member of the committee including the chairman may at any time resign from the committee by giving notice in writing of his resignation to the Chief Executive.
 - (7) The Secretary for Justice may publish notice of the appointment or termination of membership of a member (including the chairman) appointed pursuant to this section in the Gazette.
 - (8) The committee shall report annually to the Chief Executive and its annual report shall be tabled in the Legislative Council.
 - (9) The committee may determine its own procedure.

Annexure 2

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Chairman: The Honourable Mr. Justice Robert TANG Ching, G.B.M., S.B.S., J.P.

Members: The Honourable Madam Justice Susan KWAN Shuk-hing, V-P
(on the nomination of the Chief Justice)

The Honourable Mr. Justice Anderson CHOW Ka-ming, JA
(on the nomination of the Chief Justice)

Ms. FUNG Mei-fung, Jenny
(from January 2022 to May 2024)

Ms. CHAN Yuen-ping, Lorraine
(from May 2024)

Deputy Solicitor General (Policy Affairs), Department of Justice
(on the nomination of the Secretary for Justice)

Ms. JI Sang, Jerry
Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education), Education Bureau
(on the nomination of the Secretary for Education)

Mr. Brian GILCHRIST
(on the nomination of The Law Society of Hong Kong)

Mr. Dieter YIH Lai-tak, J.P.
(on the nomination of The Law Society of Hong Kong)

Mr. Richard KHAW Wei-kiang, S.C.
(on the nomination of Hong Kong Bar Association)

Mr. Isaac CHAN Chi-kong
(on the nomination of Hong Kong Bar Association)

Professor FU Hualing
Dean of Law, The University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Hong Kong)

Ms. Julienne JEN
Head of the Department of Professional Legal Education,
Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Hong Kong)

Professor LIN Feng
Dean of School of Law, City University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the President of City University of Hong Kong)

Mr. Ubaid REHMAN
Programme Director of the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws,
School of Law, City University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the President of City University of Hong Kong)

Professor Lutz-Christian WOLFF
(from August 2019 to September 2024)
Professor XI Chao
(from November 2024)
Dean of Faculty of Law, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the Vice-Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Professor Dennis HIE Hok-fung
Programme Director of Postgraduate Certificate in Laws
Programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
(on the nomination of the Vice-Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Ms. Angela SO Wing-kwan
(Member appointed under s74A(3)(a)(viii) of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap.159))

Mr. TANG Man-chun
(Member appointed under s74A(3)(a)(viii) of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap.159))

Mr. LEE Chong-ting
(on the nomination of The Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education)

Secretary:

Mr. Simon LAU
Deputy Principal Government Counsel
Department of Justice

Annexure 3



City University of Hong Kong Bachelor of Laws (LLB) 2024 Annual Report for Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training

This is a status report on the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) programme offered by the School of Law (“the School”), City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK). The report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2024.

1 2024/25 Admissions

In the 2024/25 academic year, the School admitted 82 full-time LLB students, including, 25 JUPAS applicants (through HKDSE), 35 non-JUPAS local applicants and 22 non-local applicants, including 7 Mainland NUEE students.

The intake quota was met. The average score in English Language (HKDSE) for students admitted through JUPAS was 5.38. All minimum entry requirements were met. Admission interviews were conducted for borderline applicants.

Students were admitted to three double degree programmes:

- LLB & BBA(Accountancy) admitted 14 students in total, including 4 JUPAS applicants (from HKDSE), 2 non-JUPAS local applicants, and 8 non-local applicants including 5 Mainland NUEE students
- BSocSc(Criminology) & LLB admitted 8 JUPAS applicants (HKDSE) and BSocSc(Public Policy) & LLB admitted 10 JUPAS applicants (HKDSE).
- The fourth double degree LLB & BSc Computing Mathematics did not admit any students.

2 Programme Structure

2.1 The LLB

The LLB programme is designed on the basis of adopted Major Intended Learning Outcomes (MILOs) which guide the Outcome Based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) of the various courses offered. These operate within the framework of a Discovery Enriched Curriculum which ensures that students develop skills and acquire experiences of independent learning.

The MILOs are met by a combination of core courses, Gateway Education courses and free electives. The core courses include the essential legal courses which underpin legal practice. Elective courses can be specialized or in-depth legal courses or can be courses from other

disciplines which develop interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. Students can also earn credits by taking courses abroad, through internships, research work and participation in moot competitions. The LLB programme requires the study of 120-144 credits.

Students applying for the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL) programme must complete the core courses and a set of electives which are prerequisites for professional studies.

LLB students who do not wish to enter the legal profession have the option of taking the LLB with Minors in any other discipline the university offers.

2.2 The double degree programmes

The graduation requirement for all the double degree programmes is 150 credits instead of 120 for the LLB programme, and are to be completed in 5 years instead of 4 years. The Law component includes 63 - 66 credits of the LLB Major, which are all the required courses for admission to the PCLL and include law electives. Thirty credits of GE courses are included. The LLB also included the same GE credits. The remaining credits refer to courses taught by the partner departments.

3 Learning and Developmental Opportunities for LLB and double degree Students

The LLB programme has now been designated as the Flagship Programme for the School of Law. It features a globally oriented curriculum, enhanced exchange opportunities, and guaranteed admission to the Postgraduate Certificate in Law upon meeting the entrance requirements. Additionally, it offers flagship scholarships that cover a one-time exchange sponsorship.

In response to the changing educational landscape, the School has established guidelines for using Generative AI (GenAI) in teaching and assessment. Students are generally prohibited from using GenAI outputs in assessment tasks unless permitted by a course leader. Any use of GenAI must be acknowledged, including the tools and parameters used, to maintain academic integrity. This ensures that technology integration in learning is purposeful and transparent.

Besides, the LLB programme provides for the development of general and professional skills and the enhancement of learning experiences. Each student has the choice to study different areas and systems of law, explore other disciplines and develop a unique educational profile. In particular:

- (i) For the period of report, 29 electives were offered to LLB students, enabling them to study areas of law of interest to them. Some of the electives were offered by renowned visiting scholars.
- (ii) The Discovery-Enriched Curriculum (DEC) gives students the opportunity to conduct research in the operation of the law and procedure in Hong Kong and elsewhere. This is implemented through several courses and, in addition, by the option of undertaking a research project.
- (iii) Legal placements have been incorporated as part of a credit-bearing course, providing students with the opportunity to acquire practical experience through working in a legal working environment. In 2024, 31 students completed either a part-time or full-time legal placement across a range of diverse employers, including barristers' chambers, local/international law firms, legal departments of international companies

and financial institutions in Hong Kong.

- (iv) Students have the option to engage with the edition of the *City University of Hong Kong Law Review (CityUHK LR)*. First launched in October 2009, the *CityUHK LR* publishes two issues annually. Student editors work under the mentorship of faculty members. This work is also credit-bearing.
- (v) The Legal Clinic has been instituted as a credit-bearing course, designed to offer students an immersive learning experience in a real-world case setting. It aims to cultivate essential lawyering skills and instill professional ethics. Furthermore, it provides students with the unique opportunity to collaborate closely with practitioners, enabling them to gain valuable insights and receive immediate feedback, thus fostering a robust professional network.
- (vi) The Law School has introduced an intensive preparatory course, the Law School Survival Skills Workshop, aimed at equipping new students with the fundamental skills necessary to thrive in legal education. This course also serves as an introduction to the legal profession, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the field they are about to enter. The course runs during the induction week of first-year LLB students.
- (vii) Students have the option to participate in one of the several exchange programmes with foreign universities acquiring general transferable skills and legal knowledge. School-level exchange agreements with more than 40 universities are in place and in addition the universities which participate in the Themis network of law schools. Further opportunities are provided to LLB students to go on institutional exchange at the universities with law school among the 160 partner universities of CityUHK. An additional possibility of exchange is offered through G-LEAP, a one-month intensive mode programme at the University College Oxford. Incoming exchange students enrich the educational experience of our students.

In 2024, the School sent out 11 LLB students to universities in China, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan, the Netherlands and the UK, while 14 LLB students participated in G-LEAP. In the same period, the School received 31 exchange students from overseas jurisdictions, including Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Sweden, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK.

- (viii) The School of Law has entered into a collaborative agreement with Georgetown University, enabling our most able LLB students to pursue an LLM degree at Georgetown University during their final year. The application process is highly competitive, with only the most exceptional students being selected for this collaborative programme.
- (ix) Mooting is strongly supported by the School. Our students receive training and support from our academic staff during their preparation for specific mooting competitions. In 2024, 25 LLB students participated in the following international mooting competitions:
 - The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) International Commercial Mediation Competition (Paris), 5–10 February 2024
 - The 2024 Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition (Hong Kong Regional Rounds), 17–18 February 2024

- The 31st Annual Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, 22–28 March 2024 & the 14th Budapest Pre-Moot, 18–21 March 2024
- The 21st Annual Willem C. Vis (East) International Commercial Arbitration Moot, Hong Kong, 10–17 March 2024
- The International Criminal Court (ICC) Moot Court Competition, Hague, 31 May–7 June 2024
- Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition – Asia Pacific Regional Rounds, Japan, 8–9 June 2024

4 Quality Assurance

The University operates a Departmental Academic Advisor Scheme as part of the University's quality enhancement and international benchmarking process. The School of Law including the LLB programme was reviewed in 2024. Quality assurance mechanisms are implemented for the development, teaching and examination of courses and the overall design of the LLB studies. The design and development of courses is considered by examining the suitability of the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) against the substance of the course and their contributions to the MILOs of the LLB programme. This is undertaken by the LLB programme team. The quality of teaching is monitored through formal and informal feedback from the students as well as teaching observation. Moderation of examination papers and scrutiny of marks by the examiners board is the basis for ensuring quality in the assessment methods.

5 Library and Other Facilities

The CityUHK Law Library has an excellent collection of law materials, including printed and electronic resources, as well as an extensive array of research support facilities. Legal reference services are also offered by the library. The library organized various workshops for our students, including Case Law Research Workshops and Citing Legal Information Workshops. All LLB and double degree students are encouraged to make use of the library resources and facilities. In addition, the SLW Moot Court Room is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. It is not only for mooting students to receive training in the moot court but also to arrange virtual teaching classes via Zoom/video-link facilities.

6 Supporting our Students

The School provides personal support to LLB and double degree students through personal and year tutors as well as by providing career advice and opportunities to meet with potential employers.

The Student's Professional Development and Public Service Programme was set up to provide various workshops and Webinars, including:

- The Director's Hours - Advice to All Years on Summer and Career Planning (18 January 2024)
- Many Roads to Rome A Leaders' Roundtable (25 January 2024)
- Career Talk by Denis Chang's Chambers (29 February 2024)
- Career Talk by HK Law Society - Career Path and Choices for Law Graduates (2 September 2024)
- How to Write a Winning CV and Ace your Interview (3 September 2024)

- Everything You Wanted to Know About the Barrister Profession But Were Afraid to Ask (9 September 2024)
- Talk by Karas So LLP (11 September 2024)
- Finding Your Vocation and Working Towards Your Dream From Your First Year of Law School (14 September 2024)
- Career Talk by Eversheds Sutherland (19 Sept 2024)
- Application for Local Law Firms' Training Contracts and Beyond - An Alumni's Roundtable (21 September 2024)
- Clyde & Co Seminar - Who Pays If a Director Goes Rogue (23 September 2024)
- Talk by Clifford Chance (26 Sept 2024)
- Pinsent Masons - Graduate Recruitment Talk (7 October 2024)
- Legal Trainee Career Talk by Department of Justice (11 Nov 2024)
- Seminar on CV/Cover Letter Drafting and Individual Consultation Session (19 Dec 2024)

7 Staffing

As of 2024, there are 36 academic and teaching staff teaching in the LLB programme, hailing from more than 10 countries. In addition, 6 adjunct and visiting staff members contribute to LLB teaching, offering practical and international experience. Our faculty offers a broad spectrum of courses to our undergraduate students, ensuring a comprehensive educational experience. Furthermore, the School is actively seeking highly qualified professionals to join our existing team and contribute to our commitment to academic excellence.

8 Graduation and Further Studies

In 2024, 43 LLB students graduated. Under the honour class classifications, all 4 students graduated with second-class honours or above. Under the new award classification, there are 2 student graduating with Summa Cum Laude and Magna Cum Laude Awards, respectively, while 5 students are graduating with Cum Laude Awards. The remaining 30 students graduated normally. Most of our students were admitted to the PCLL programme at CityUHK thus continuing their legal professional development.

Professor Michael Tsimplis
 LLB Programme Director
 School of Law
 City University of Hong Kong
 February 2025

City University of Hong Kong
Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL)
2024 Annual Report
for Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training

1. 2024/25 Admissions

The School of Law (“the School”) received **348** applications for its PCLL programme for the academic year 2024/25. **225** offers were made by the SLW, and eventually **168** students were admitted to the PCLL programme. Although the number of offers was consistent with figures from previous years, eventual enrollment was lower than in past years due to a higher-than-usual number of students failing to meet the conditions of their admission requirements.

Under the Special Track Programme, designed for candidates with at least 2 years of full-time law-related work experience (e.g., paralegals, law clerks, court clerks and legal assistants) who may not otherwise qualify for admission based solely on their academic results, there were 34 applicants. Following the interviews, we gave 28 offers to the applicants. We have made a concerted effort to admit more candidates with relevant experience, recognizing that while some may face academic challenges, their practical insights significantly enrich classroom discussions and contribute to the overall learning experience.

50.9% of those UGC-funded places were given to graduates from universities in Hong Kong.

As of 31 October 2024, 166 students were studying in the CityU PCLL programme.

The 2024/25 PCLL programme is comprised of **52.4%** local graduates and **47.6%** graduates from overseas institutions. Appendix 1 contains a list of the universities from which these PCLL students graduated.

The following matters are noted in relation to the admissions process:

1. The Admissions Committee began reviewing applications in February 2024 and regularly thereafter. This enabled several early conditional and unconditional offers to be made to academically strong applicants.
2. **41** applicants to whom conditional offers were made were unable to take up their place (most of them being unsuccessful in one or more of the Conversion Exam Board examinations). **16** applicants declined our offers due to personal reasons.
3. All students enrolled attained the minimum IELTS standard.

2. Class Size

Our small group size is around 11 students for core and elective courses.

3. Assessment Regime and Outcomes

3.1 Assessment Regime

Assessments were taken under controlled conditions through online typed examinations and performance-based assessments.

Since implementing online typed examinations in 2017/18 in collaboration with our technical staff and the CityU e-learning team, we have adopted this assessment method for all courses, and it continues to be effective. The practice has been well-received by both course examiners and students, underscoring its ongoing success.

3.2 Assessment Outcomes

2022/23:

No. of students who failed to graduate from the PCLL programme:	7
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No. of students who failed one or more subjects were required to take supplementary examinations:	83 (including the 7 who failed to graduate from the PCLL, 4 who passed after supplementary examination as 1 st attempt, 1 who graduated in 2024 after passing supplementary examination in December 2023)
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2023/24:

No. of students who failed to graduate from the PCLL programme:	9
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No. of students who failed one or more subjects at first attempt and were required to take supplementary examinations:	72 (including 9 who failed to graduate from the PCLL, 1 who graduated in 2025 after passing supplementary examination in December 2024)
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4. Staffing

In 2023/24, 12 full-time staff and 34 part-time staff (practitioners) taught in the PCLL programme.

In 2024/25, 12 full-time staff and 39 part-time staff (practitioners) taught in the PCLL programme.

Many teaching staff members have been instructing in the PCLL programme for some time, concurrently maintaining their legal practices. We are dedicated to enhancing the PCLL programme by actively recruiting experienced practitioners from various areas of practice to join our teaching team.

5. Curriculum

In 2024-25, there are nine core courses: Interlocutory Advocacy and Interviewing; Trial Advocacy; Mediation and Negotiation; Conveyancing Practice; Wills and Probate Practice; Corporate and Commercial Practice; Civil Litigation Practice; Criminal Litigation Practice; and Professional Conduct and Practice.

Students must also take three courses from the following nine electives: Bar Course; Foundations in Mainland Related Legal Transactions; Family Law Practice; Financial Regulatory Practice; Personal Injuries Practice; Chinese for Legal Practice; Law and Technology; Corporate Fundraising for Lawyers; and Commercial Writing and Drafting.

Changes in 2024/25 academic year

Starting from the 2024-25 academic year, we implemented significant curriculum changes following a careful assessment of the programme and in response to feedback from students, staff, and consultations with professional bodies. The main goal of these changes is to improve the distribution of contact hours to enhance the quality and depth of student learning experiences. To achieve this, various strategies were employed, including merging similar courses and integrating related content across different courses. As part of this restructuring, the Litigation Writing and Drafting course was removed to allow for these adjustments.

Certain courses, including Mediation and Negotiation, Trial Advocacy, and Interlocutory Advocacy & Interviewing, have been reorganized into a more intensive format. The first run of these intensive courses was successfully conducted without major issues. Moving forward, we will meet with course leaders to review their implementation and explore further improvements to enhance their effectiveness.

Additionally, we have reclassified Corporate and Commercial Practice (Practice (Remark: The course "Corporate and Commercial Practice" is initially a year-long course. The change mainly involves converting Part B of the said course into an elective course.) and Commercial Writing and Drafting, from core to elective status in Semester B. The re-classified course of Corporate and Commercial Practice is currently titled as Corporate Fundraising for Lawyers (Part B course). These modifications have received full approval from both the Law Society and the Bar Association.

6. The Future

As we look ahead, we remain committed to continuously enhancing students' learning experiences within our evolving curriculum. While traditional teaching and learning

methods remain foundational, we recognize the profound impact of technological advancements, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence.

Legal practice is undergoing significant transformation, and we are dedicated to ensuring our students are well-equipped to navigate these changes. We will continue to assess the implications of emerging technologies on the profession and explore innovative ways to integrate relevant skills into our training. By doing so, we aim to prepare our graduates not only to adapt to this evolving landscape but also to leverage these advancements effectively, adding value to their colleagues, employers, and clients from the outset of their careers.

7. Involvement of the Profession

We are happy to report that the profession continues to be very involved with training the CityU PCLL students. Involvement has been in the form of guest lectures, presentations on different topics, assistance in assessments and demonstrations in various advocacy courses. The School of Law's Students' Professional Development and Public Service Program, in partnership with the legal profession, including law firms, companies, and NGOs, arranged a series of engaging presentations for law students, including PCLL students (see information below). Opportunities for jobs and internships were also sought for students during the year 2024.

- The Director's Hours: Advice to All Years on Summer and Career Planning (18 Jan 2024)
- Many Roads to Rome—A Leader's Roundtable (25 Jan 2024)
- Inside & Outside of the Courtroom: How's it to be a Barrister (29 Feb 2024)
- CV Editing/Career Consultation/Simulated Interview/Practitioners' Networking Workshops (3 Feb 2024, 24 Feb 2024 and 2 March 2024)
- Career Paths and Choices for Law Graduates – Career Talk by The Law Society of Hong Kong (2 Sept 2024)
- How to Write a Winning CV and Ace Your Interview (3 Sept 2024)
- Everything You Wanted to Know About the Barrister Profession But Were Afraid to Ask (9 Sept 2024)
- Career Talk on Government Counsel Grade (11 Sept 2024)
- Karas So LLP – Graduate Recruitment Talk (11 Sept 2024)
- Finding Your Vocation and Moving Towards Your Dream From the First Year of Law School (14 Sept 2024)
- Real-World Legal Battles: Behind the Scenes of Landmark Cases (19 Sept 2024)
- Application for Local Law Firms' Training Contract and Beyond – An Alumni's Roundtable (21 Sept 2024)
- Who Pays If a Director Goes Rogue? (23 Sept 2024)
- Clifford Chance Information Session - Clifford Chance as an International Law Firm (26 Sept 2024)
- Connect your Career at Pinsent Masons (7 Oct 2024)
- 2024 Legal Trainee Career Talk by Department of Justice (11 Nov 2024)
- Seminar on CV drafting and Professional Development Planning (19 Dec 2024)
- Christmas Party for Underprivileged Children (22 Dec 2024)

8. Conclusion

We are committed to cultivating well-rounded legal professionals who are equipped to contribute meaningfully to the Hong Kong legal market. Our programme goes beyond teaching practical legal skills; we emphasize the importance of teamwork, ethical responsibility, and a strong commitment to community service. We take great pride in our graduates and remain dedicated to shaping each cohort into professionals who will strengthen and enrich the local legal landscape.

As a global financial and multicultural hub, Hong Kong demands legal practitioners who can navigate complex issues with an international outlook. Our curriculum is designed to instill this mindset, ensuring that our students develop the adaptability and collaborative skills necessary to engage effectively with peers and clients worldwide.

Looking ahead, we recognize that advancements in technology will continue to transform the legal profession, just as they are reshaping industries across the board. We are committed to preparing our students for these shifts by equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate emerging challenges and seize new opportunities. Our goal is to ensure they graduate ready to add value to their employers and clients in an evolving professional landscape.

We value feedback from the profession and welcome collaboration with all stakeholders to further enhance the quality of our programme. With an eye on the future, we are excited about the continuous evolution of our curriculum and remain dedicated to setting new benchmarks of excellence in legal education.

Mr Ubaid Rehman
PCLL Programme Director
School of Law
City University of Hong Kong
February 2025

Appendix 1

Students admitted to the 2024/25 PCLL programme graduated from the following universities:

Anglia Ruskin University, UK
BPP University, UK
Cardiff University, UK
Chinese University of Hong Kong
City University of Hong Kong
King's College London, UK
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK
Macquarie University, Australia
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Oxford Brookes University, UK
University College London, UK
University of Birmingham, UK
University of Bristol, UK
University of Cambridge, UK
University of Durham, UK
University of Essex, UK
University of Exeter, UK
University of Hong Kong
University of Hong Kong (SPACE)
University of Lancaster, UK
University of Law, UK
University of Leeds, UK
University of London, UK (Ext/Int'l Programme)
University of London, UK (Queen Mary)
University of London, UK (Royal Holloway and Bedford New College)
University of London, UK (SOAS)
University of Melbourne, Australia
University of New South Wales, Australia
University of Surrey, UK
University of Sussex, UK
University of Sydney, Australia
University of Warwick, UK

**City University of Hong Kong
Juris Doctor (JD)
2024 Annual Report
for Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training**

1. Background

The JD (Juris Doctor) programme is a graduate entry law degree for applicants who have a non-law bachelor degree or an undergraduate law degree from a non-common law jurisdiction. JD graduates may enter the legal profession in Hong Kong after subsequently completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL) or may use the gained legal knowledge and skills in other professions.

This status report on the JD Programme at the School of Law (“the School”) of City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2024.

2. 2024/25 Admissions

The minimum entry requirements for admission to JD are (i) a bachelor’s degree in a non-law discipline, or (ii) a bachelor’s degree in law from a non-common law jurisdiction obtained after at least eight semesters of full-time study. Moreover, applicants must also be proficient in English. For an applicant whose entrance qualification is obtained from an institution where the medium of instruction is not English, the minimum English language proficiency requirement is as follows:

- a TOEFL score of 100 (internet-based); 71 (revised paper-delivered test; sum of reading, Listening and Writing section scores); or
- a band score of 7.5 or above in IELTS, with no individual score below 6.5, and a minimum score of 7.0 in the Academic Writing; or
- a total score of 520 in the Chinese Mainland's College English Test (Band 6).

Entry into the JD programme is quite competitive. The number and quality of applicants has remained strong. The School received 407 applications for admission to JD in 2024/25. The School admitted 125 students into the JD programme in 2024/25. The intake quality of students admitted to the JD programme in 2024/25 was of a high standard. Around 66% of admitted students received their postgraduate or bachelor’s degree from highly ranked universities globally, meaning their universities ranked in the top 200 according to QS/ THE/ ARWU, or from the top law schools from Mainland China. For students who were admitted to the programme with a bachelor’s degree as main qualification, they achieved an average GPA of 3.27 (base value as 4) or an average mark of 85%. For students who were admitted to the programme with a postgraduate degree as the main qualification, they achieved an average GPA of 3.38 (base value as 4) or an average mark of 86%.

Several outreach initiatives (e.g., placing advertisements and advertorials in local newspapers and education supplements, holding online information talks and participating in law fairs) were taken to attract applicants from all over the world. Our applicants come from a diverse range of

academic backgrounds such as accounting and finance, economics, business administration, property management, physics, chemical and biological engineering, molecular biomedical science, materials engineering, civil engineering, biotechnology, nutrition, food science, civil law, language, translation, European studies, architectural studies, psychology, sociology, criminology, social policy and administration, political science and journalism. This diversity of the JD student body enhances greatly the quality of class interactions, discussions and the employability of our graduating cohorts.

Subsequent to students' admission to the programme, events and orientations for newly admitted students were organized. The events provided students an opportunity to know each other better and learn about various academic opportunities offered by the School.

3. Programme Structure

The JD programme comprises a total of 72 credit units. Students have to complete the following required courses (each worth 3 credits): Hong Kong Legal System and Legal Methods, Research and Writing. The remaining credits can be made up by enrolling in elective courses. The JD programme structure allows students to take 6 non-PCLL required electives (worth 18 credits) assuming that they are also going to take 48 credits worth of PCLL-required courses (16 courses).

The JD programme provides the necessary course requirements for admission to the PCLL programme. Apart from the two required courses for the degree itself, students are required to complete the following courses if they wish to pursue the PCLL programme: Law of Contract I & II, Law of Tort I & II, Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, Criminal Law I & II, Land Law I & II, Law of Evidence, Equity and Trusts I and II, Company Law I & II and Commercial Law.

Students who do not wish to join the legal profession in Hong Kong can still benefit from the JD programme by choosing a range of elective courses offered by the JD, LLM and LLMArbDR programmes. The School offers a wide variety of elective courses such as Contemporary Issues of Human Rights Law, Introduction to Law and Economics, Introduction to Information Law, Legal and Operational Aspects of Corporate Governance, International Investment Law, Chinese Maritime Law, Banking Law, Cyber Law, Current Issues in WTO Law, Maritime Insurance Law and Charterparties Law. In 2024/25, the School also offered 1.5-credit intensive elective courses such as Contemporary Issues in Trusts Law: Asia-Pacific, Commercial Law in Asia, Legal Tech: Legal Technology and the Law Profession, Law and Technology, and Responsible Business Conduct. These short courses are taught by legal practitioners or by faculty members from other universities.

JD students have an option to specialise in any one of the following areas by taking any four elective courses (12 credits) from the respective specialisation list below:

- 1) **International Commercial Law:** LW5631 Banking Law; LW5641 Intellectual Property: Theory, Copyright and Design; LW5643 Cyber Law; LW5664 European Competition Law and Policy; LW6140E Chinese and Comparative Commercial Law; LW6144E International Trade Law; LW6161E Competition Law; LW6167E Current Issues in WTO Law; LW6180E International Commercial Contracts and Uniform Sales Law.
- 2) **Alternative Dispute Resolution:** LW6142E International Investment Law; LW6401 Dispute Resolution in Theory and Practice; LW6405 Arbitration Law; LW6406 Mediation Practice; LW6407 Arbitration Practice and Award Writing; LW6408 International

Arbitration; LW5649 International Mooting and Advocacy (3 credits) OR LW5649B International Mooting and Advocacy (6 credits).

- 3) **Chinese and Comparative Law:** LW5626 Comparative Law; LW6127E Chinese and Comparative Intellectual Property Law; LW6134E Chinese and Comparative Company Law; LW6140E Chinese and Comparative Commercial Law; LW6141E Chinese Foreign Trade and Investment Law

Depending upon the interest of students and the course offering in the future, these specialised streams may be modified. The above course list may be reviewed and amended from time to time, subject to the availability of teaching staff.

Whether or not a student chooses to specialise in any of the above areas, she will receive the award of Juris Doctor (法律博士). Consistent with City University's policy on streamlining award titles, the award titles do not include areas of specialisation. The specialised area, if elected by a student, will appear on the academic transcript only.

The master implementation plan for the LLB and JD co-teaching programme has been successfully implemented. The co-teaching of common courses employs economies of scale given limited teaching resources, particularly for some courses for which recruitment has been challenging across all Hong Kong law schools. Co-teaching allows the School to offer a greater selection of electives to both LLB and JD students than would be possible if all electives were separately taught. In 2024/25, 22 electives were offered to JD students.

4. Teaching and Learning

The School promotes active and interactive learning. The teaching/learning activities and the assessment tasks for each course are aligned with the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs). CILOs are then aligned with the JD Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs). The PILOs of the JD programme stipulate that after completing the programme, students should be able to:

- 1) explain and assess specified areas of the law and the legal system of Hong Kong, with particular emphasis on the law in action and the dynamic interplay between law and other social phenomena;
- 2) assess the common law system and its values, and its interaction with the law and the legal system of Mainland China, the East Asian region and the wider world;
- 3) explain, interpret and apply main principles of ethics, civil duty, and social and professional responsibility;
- 4) critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of law as a means of regulating society in the context of competing and conflicting interests; and
- 5) demonstrate and apply skills of legal analysis and reasoning, of legal research, problem solving, and of oral and written communication to a level appropriate to a graduate-entry degree in law.

To be in line with City University's overarching Discovery-enriched Curriculum (DEC) initiative, various DEC elements have been incorporated into JD courses. Students are encouraged to think critically, to solve real-world problems and to produce new research of high

quality during their degree programme. All course syllabuses have been reformulated in a format called “SYL” with the incorporation of DEC elements.

Students receive three direct contact hours for each 3-credit course every week. Classes are generally conducted as a combination of lectures and small group tutorials, though certain courses are taught in a seminar style. JD students do not normally share tutorial classes with undergraduate LLB students.

5. Assessment

The assessment pattern for most courses is in the form of an assignment, in-class participation and a final examination. The final exam component is generally worth between 40 and 70 percent. Since all JD courses are offered at a postgraduate level and students are expected to achieve a suitable standard of competency, students are required to achieve a minimum of 40 percent in each of the assessment components to pass the course. Students are provided written feedback on their assignment before the final examination so as to aid their learning.

6. Academic Quality

The EAA arrangements for the JD programme have been discontinued. Following the positive assessments and advice given by external advisors over the years, we feel sufficiently confident in the quality of our programmes to discontinue with EEAs. To maintain the academic quality of the JD programme, the examination papers are subjected to internal moderation.

7. Exchange Opportunities

The School recognizes the importance of providing students with overseas exchange opportunities. Overseas exchanges provide a platform for students to exchange ideas and experiences about different legal issues and legal systems. The School has entered into collaborative agreements with several leading universities such as Amsterdam Law School, University of Bergen, KU Leuven, University of Liège, Durham University, University of Sheffield, University of San Francisco, Case Western Reserve University, University of Montreal, University of Mannheim, Fribourg University, Victoria University of Wellington, National Chengchi University, National Taiwan University, Fudan University, China University of Political Science and Law, East China University of Political Science and Law, Jilin University, Shanghai Jiaotong University Koguan Law School, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, Renmin University, Tsinghua University, Zhongnan University of Economics & Law, Zhejiang University and Singapore Management University. We received seven incoming postgraduate exchange students in Semesters A&B 2023/24 from Bocconi University, Italy; Vienna University of Economic and Business, Austria; University of Bergen, Norway; China University of Political Science and Law, Fudan University and Shanghai Jiaotong University, China. One CityUHK JD student went out on exchange for a semester.

8. Co-curricular and/or Overseas Academic Activities

The learning environment of JD students is enriched by their participation in some of the following activities:

International Mooting Competitions

As participation in mooting competitions greatly enhances students’ mooting and advocacy skills, the School continues to facilitate students’ participation in various regional and

international mooting competitions by providing extensive training and financial support. In academic year 2023-2024, 10 JD students participated in the following international mooting competitions:

- The 2024 Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court, HK, 17 - 18 February 2024 & USA, 30 March - 6 April 2024
- The 21st Annual Willem C. Vis (East) International Commercial Arbitration Moot, Hong Kong, 10 - 17 March 2024
- The 31st Annual Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, 22 - 28 March 2024 & the 14th Budapest Pre-Moot, 18 - 21 March 2024
- The 2024 International Criminal Court (ICC) Moot Court Competition, Hague, 31 May - 7 June 2024
- Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition 2024, Japan, 8 - 9 June 2024

Legal Placement

The credit-bearing Legal Placement course provides JD students with opportunities to complete internships not only in Hong Kong but also in Mainland China and in other parts of the world. The placement aims to enhance students' hands-on experience to complement theoretical learning from the classroom. In Hong Kong, students were placed in various legal departments, financial institutions, chambers and law firms. In Semester A, Semester B and Summer 2024, 49 JD students participated in Legal Placements in Hong Kong and 7 JD students participated in Legal Placements in Mainland China.

Global Engagement

To promote international collaboration and efficient student exchanges, the School of Law has entered into a collaborative agreement with Georgetown University (Georgetown) and Melbourne University (Melbourne). Our JD students will have the opportunity to study the LLM at Georgetown and the Law Master's at Melbourne. These collaborations will provide our students with an opportunity to obtain professional degrees in foreign jurisdictions and in Hong Kong. It will enhance students' employability in foreign jurisdictions with an overall reduction in study time and cost.

We continue our effort to build up formidable partnerships with leading law schools from around the world through groupings such as the Association of Asian Law Schools, the Center for Transnational Legal Studies of Georgetown University Law Center, the Themis Network Agreement and The Private Law Consortium. We also have an existing double degree agreement with University Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne. This arrangement enables participating students to obtain a Master's degree from Paris 1 University and also a JD from CityUHK. We have entered into a similar agreement with Fribourg University, Switzerland. Our JD students are provided with opportunity to study the LLM programme at Fribourg University, obtaining two degrees in three years' study time.

Meanwhile, the School joined hands with the College of Business to introduce an innovative professional degree collaboration across the law and business disciplines. This accelerated path to business and law qualifications will be offered by the JD and MBA programmes. One MBA student was admitted to the JD programme during academic year 2024/25. Students may enrol in either the JD or MBA programme first, with opportunities to take courses from the partner programme. Credit units earned can then be used for credit transfer when the student subsequently enrolls in the other programme.

The Global Legal Education Awareness Project aims to promote excellence in legal education with a view to providing opportunities for our law students to obtain a global perspective in the study of law. In the summer of 2024, 16 JD students spent a month at University College, Oxford (United Kingdom) to study a credit-bearing law course on European Competition Law and Policy.

City University of Hong Kong Law Review (CityU LR)

CityU LR is our student-edited law journal. Every year, about twenty students are selected and trained by the Faculty Editor to edit the journal. This elective law course has been introduced to harness the writing and editing skills of the Board members. Articles published by *CityU LR* are available through HeinOnline and Westlaw. The journal currently ranks 17th of 49 among Asian Law journals on the Washington & Lee law journal ranking scheme, which is highly competitive with other top-rated faculty edited law journals and superior to many quality Asian Law journals published in the UK, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, US, the Netherlands and Singapore.

9. Supporting our Students

The School provides personal support to JD students through academic advisors and year tutors as well as by providing career advice and opportunities to meet with potential employers.

The SLW Students' Professional Development and Public Service Programme was set up to provide various workshops and Webinars, including:

- The Director's Hours - Advice to All Years on Summer and Career Planning (18 January 2024)
- Many Roads to Rome: A Leaders' Roundtable (25 January 2024)
- Career Talk by Denis Chang's Chambers (29 February 2024)
- Career Talk by HK Law Society - Career Path and Choices for Law Graduates (2 September 2024)
- How to Write a Winning CV and Ace your Interview (3 September 2024)
- Everything You Wanted to Know About the Barrister Profession But Were Afraid to Ask (9 September 2024)
- Talk by Karas So LLP (11 September 2024)
- Finding Your Vocation and Working Towards Your Dream From Your First Year of Law School (14 September 2024)
- Career Talk by Eversheds Sutherland (19 Sept 2024)
- Application for Local Law Firms' Training Contracts and Beyond - An Alumni's Roundtable (21 September 2024)
- Clyde & Co Seminar - Who Pays If a Director Goes Rogue (23 September 2024)
- Talk by Clifford Chance (26 Sept 2024)
- Pinsent Masons - Graduate Recruitment Talk (7 October 2024)
- Legal Trainee Career Talk by Department of Justice (11 Nov 2024)
- Seminar on CV/Cover Letter Drafting and Individual Consultation Session (19 Dec 2024)

10. Library and Other Facilities

The Law Library based at the Run Run Shaw Library on campus provides an extensive selection of print and online legal materials, including legal treatises, law books, law reports, statute sets, law journals and databases, etc. Most of the electronic resources can be accessed both on campus and

remotely. Legal reference services are also offered by the library. Law Library workshops are held throughout the year to equip students with the core research skills: finding cases and legislation, locating ADR legal materials, effective use of secondary materials, searching databases, and citing legal information. Library staff also compile research guides and online tutorials. The library continues to provide customized library collections and services to JD students. The essential readings for JD courses are acquired and put on course reserve.

11. Looking Ahead

The JD programme at CityUHK, the first of its kind in Hong Kong, is running extremely well and our JD graduates are highly sought after by local as well as international law firms, together with employers outside of legal practice. We offer a global learning environment to our students. In the coming years, the School of Law aims to offer more elective courses, explore more overseas learning opportunities and to streamline the learning and teaching platform.

Professor Daniel Pascoe
JD Programme Director
School of Law
City University of Hong Kong
February 2025

Annexure 4

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law

Report on the LLB Programme

(January to December 2024)

1. Admissions

The LLB programme's annual admission quota is 73 in the current triennium (2022-25). 92 students (including 38 JUPAS students, 48 non-JUPAS students and 6 Mainland Gaokao students) were ultimately admitted in the 2024 intake. Among the 48 non-JUPAS students, 9 were non-local students, from Mainland China and France.

In addition to the review of minimum entry requirements the Faculty conducts short interviews as part of the admissions process, to allow for individualized assessment of the students and to give the students the opportunity to discuss their goals and interest in studying at CUHK LAW with a member of our faculty.

2. Course Offering

Supplementing the core courses, the LLB programme continues to offer a wide range of electives. New electives are added to the programme on a regular basis. In the period in question, new elective course approved included:

- (i) *Business and Law in Hong Kong;*
- (ii) *Chinese Private International Law;*
- (iii) *Insolvency Law*

3. Use of Chinese Language

The Chinese University of Hong Kong implements bilingual education, and Chinese language courses form a compulsory part of the curriculum for all students admitted under both the JUPAS and non-JUPAS schemes. The LLB programme places great emphasis on improving the bilingual skills of our students.

All LLB students are required to fulfill 5 units of Chinese language courses, selected from the below options:

- (i) *University Chinese I* and *University Chinese II*;
- (ii) *Chinese Law* (Summer Course at Tsinghua University) and either *Oral Communication Skills* or *Chinese Business Planning*.

These courses are designed to strengthen students' ability to use Chinese. Students admitted under the non-JUPAS scheme may be granted exemption on a case-by-case basis after assessment of their Chinese language ability. Where exemption is granted, it is compulsory for the relevant student to take other Chinese language courses suitable for their level of linguistic ability.

In addition, the LLB programme normally offers two electives (*Chinese Law (Summer Course)* and *Chinese Law Internship*) conducted in Putonghua and delivered on the Mainland, which allow students to acquire a deeper understanding of Chinese law and the Chinese legal system, and to sharpen their Chinese language skills. Students who have taken these courses report that they have substantially improved their Chinese language reading, writing and communication skills.

4. Experiential Learning

The LLB programme continues to emphasize experiential learning as part of law students' university experience, recognizing its ability to broaden their learning horizons. In addition to a wide range of activities organized at the University and College levels the Faculty offers exchange programmes, internships and credit-bearing Summer Study Abroad Programmes (SSAPs) in Beijing and Toronto. The Faculty has established two 4-year Dual LLB-JD Degree Programmes, with the University of Exeter Law School and The Dickson Poon School of Law of King's College London (KCL), as well as a 4-year Dual LLB-LLM Degree Programme with the The Dickson Poon School of Law of King's College London. For the first two programmes, students study in the LLB programme at the partner university for two years, followed by two year in CUHK's JD programme. For the second programme, students study at CUHK for three years, after which they spend a year to obtain an LLM at KCL in London. The Faculty continues to work to identify exchange partner institutions, while also encouraging students to participate in exchange schemes over the course of a semester or two. CUHK LAW also organizes lectures by distinguished guests and visits to legal institutions, as well as social activities conducted as part of our Distinguished Professional Mentorship Scheme. We are most grateful for the strong support from the legal profession that has made these out-of-class learning activities a great success.

5. Mooting Participation

LLB students continue to participate in international mooting competitions, an area in which CUHK LAW has had extensive success in previous years. In the 2023-24 academic year, CUHK sent teams to participate in the following moots:

- International Air Law Moot Court Competition
- International Criminal Court Competition (English)
- Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition
- Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Moot
- Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot (Hong Kong) (Vienna)

CUHK LAW's moot teams continued to excel in 2024. Some highlights included:

International Air Law Moot Court

- Air law moot team won the 14th International Air Law Moot Competition. The team also ranked the best memorial (respondent) and the best oral argument (respondent)

International Criminal Court Competition (English)

- Team advanced to the semi-finals of the oral rounds, finishing as rank 7.

Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

- Team narrowly missed advancing to the Grand Final in the Regional competition. It won 1st Best Oralist and Third Best Oralist awards.

Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Moot

- Team advanced to the quarter-finals of the oral rounds
- Won Second Honourable Submission (Defendant)

Vis (East) International Commercial Arbitration Law Moot

- Honourable Mention(top 10%) for Memorandum on behalf of Claimant
- One of 32 teams from 140 participating teams that qualified for the elimination rounds, advancing to the final 16 teams.

The Faculty will continue to encourage mooting among our students and support their participation and success in these competitions.

6. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

Quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure that we deliver quality legal education to best serve the community.

To ensure the quality of our courses the Faculty administers teaching evaluation surveys to students to collect their feedback in a systematic manner. The Assistant Dean/LLB Programme Director and the Deputy LLB Programme Director meet LLB representatives from each year in each academic term to collect students' views and concerns in relation to teaching and learning. The Faculty responds to all student questions and concerns through written answers distributed to all students. A "staff-student consultative committee" has been established since 2019 to allow students to engage in conversations with one another as well as with teaching staff regarding their concerns in relation to all aspects of their studies and university life. The Faculty will continue to work closely with our students to aid independent learning and ensure the best learning environment.

There is rigorous internal moderation of course outlines and exams. All new courses require a detailed outline and plan and must be approved by both the Committee on Undergraduate and

Graduate Studies and the Faculty Board. Each semester, exam panels are convened to review proposed exam questions for quality and consistency. The Assistant Dean/LLB Programme Director and the Deputy LLB Programme Director then review all the exam questions a second time. This double-layer of review has proved effective in catching errors before the exams are printed and distributed to students. There is also an exam moderation procedure, under which two or three exam papers from each grading band and all failure grades will be marked again by a second member of staff, to ensure fairness and consistency.

7. Learning Resources

Given the centrality of law reports, ordinances and scholarly writings to the study of law, the Faculty places great emphasis on its library resources. The Lee Quo Wei Law Library consists of approx. 124,594 volumes of books and bound periodicals on law or law related subjects and provides access to over 6,181 electronic law journals. There are 103 electronic legal databases available to students and staff. Wherever possible electronic format is the preferred option for books, law journals and serials. The Faculty is investing heavily in library materials to support future years of its law programmes.

8. Career Preparation

The Academic Advisory System and the Distinguished Professional Mentorship Scheme provide pastoral care and support for our students. The Academic Advisory System ensures close faculty-student relations. The Distinguished Professional Mentors help link our students to the local practitioner community, providing an invaluable service in terms of helping them to understand and appreciate the working life of a legal practitioner, and obtain guidance as to their future career choices. The students also have access to alumni mentoring through the Faculty's e-mentoring programme.

Mr. Paul Mitchard, K.C., served as the Director of Career Planning and Professionalism during the 2023-24 academic year. Following his retirement, Mr. Hans Herrmann, the Assistant Dean of Career Planning and Student Affairs, has taken over the role. Together with the support the Faculty receives from local professionals, Mr. Mitchard and Mr. Herrmann provide our students with valuable guidance on career planning, job applications, interview techniques, professionalism and other matters relating to careers, including through a series of seminars matched to the stages of the annual recruitment rounds and through counselling sessions offered to students who require personalised assistance on career issues.

The Office of Career Planning and Professionalism has also continued keeping the Faculty's Virtual Careers Resource Centre up-to-date with a legal directory of law firms and chambers in Hong Kong and their information pertaining to their recruitment processes and offers. The Office also produces a biweekly newsletter on developments in legal business and arranges a series of career seminars, talks and workshops, delivered by international and local law firm associates and partners and members of the Hong Kong Bar and the Department of Justice. These events have been very well attended and well received by students.

9. Graduates

As in previous years, the majority of our LLB graduates continue their PCLL studies at CUHK after completion of the LLB programme. About 86% of our LLB graduates who applied for the PCLL programme at CUHK were admitted in 2024. Those not joining the PCLL programme pursued other postgraduate programmes in Hong Kong and abroad as well as other career paths.

Michelle Miao

Assistant Dean (Undergraduate Studies) and LLB Programme Director

Faculty of Law

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

February 2025

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Law**

Report on the Juris Doctor Programme

(January to December 2024)

1. Background

The Juris Doctor (JD) is a graduate entry programme. CUHK LAW designed and offered it as a response to the recommendation of the *Redmond-Roper Report* “that there should be opportunity for mature age students, and graduates in other disciplines, to study law - both for equity and access reasons and for the richness and diversity this brings to the law schools and the legal profession” (*Report*, 11.4 at p. 271).

2. Teaching philosophy and structure

CUHK LAW teaches the JD exclusively at graduate level. JD students thus enjoy a dedicated programme. They share some courses with other students (i.e. those reading for the Master of Laws (LLM) and a small number of exchange and associate students).

CUHK LAW examines the JD as a graduate programme. Students thus must perform to graduate standards.

3. Admission requirements

CUHK LAW required applicants for admission to the 2024-25 JD to have:

- (i) graduated from a recognised university and obtained a bachelor's degree in a non-law subject or a law degree from a non-common law jurisdiction, normally with honours not lower than Second Class; or
- (ii) graduated from an honours programme of a recognised university with a bachelor's degree in a non-law subject or a law degree from a non-common law jurisdiction, normally achieving an average grade of not lower than "B" in undergraduate courses; or
- (iii) completed a course of study in a tertiary educational institution and obtained professional or similar qualifications equivalent to an honours degree.

Applicants must also have satisfied the JD's English Language Proficiency Requirement by:

- possessing a bachelor's degree obtained by completing a programme of study in Hong Kong or an English-speaking country, or which was taught primarily in the English language; or

- achieving a result of Band 7.5 or better in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which result was obtained not more than two years prior to the date of applying to join the JD; or
- achieving a result of 600 (Paper Based Test), or 100 (Internet Based Test) or better in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), which result was obtained not more than two years prior to the date of applying to join the JD; or
- producing alternative evidence of English proficiency equivalent to one of the preceding measures.

4. Programme philosophy and structure

The JD is an intellectually enriching general education in law. It offers various Faculty core courses (details of which are below). It offers all subjects that the Hong Kong legal professions stipulate as pre-requisites for admission to the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL). It also allows candidates to read a wide range of challenging elective courses in the common law, Chinese law, comparative law, international law and the law of trade, business and finance.

The JD consists of 72 credit units (a standard semester-length course being 3 credit units). Students have an average of 3 contact hours per week with teachers in each course. Students entering the JD complete it in full-time mode or part-time mode.

Full-time mode students can finish the JD in 24 months by completing courses in each summer term. Full-time students may take up to 48 months to complete the JD.

Part-time mode students can complete their studies in 42 months (although students may, in exceptional circumstances, apply to accelerate their studies and complete the JD in 36 months on CUHK LAW's recommendation and with the Graduate Council's permission). CUHK LAW lets part-time students take up to 84 months to complete the JD. The JD is currently the only qualifying law degree offered in part-time mode by a Hong Kong university.

To graduate, students must complete five Faculty-required courses. These are *LAWS6001 Legal System*, *LAWS6004 Legal Research, Analysis and Writing*, *LAWS6006 Comparative Legal Studies*, *LAWS6007 Ethics and Jurisprudence*, and either *LAWS6901 Independent Research* or *LAWS6902 Independent Research Dissertation*. These required components give JD students the essential foundational knowledge and skills for a well-rounded general legal education and a first-hand appreciation of the relationship between the legal system and the broader community that it serves and regulates.

Students aspiring to become Hong Kong-qualified barristers or solicitors must pursue particular courses mandated by the Hong Kong legal professions. Passing these courses entitles students to apply for admission to the PCLL Programme. These courses are also open to students who do not plan to apply for the PCLL.

In addition to the five required courses, CUHK LAW offers JD elective courses from a wide range of intellectually stimulating and professionally enhancing offerings. This arrangement enables students to complete their degrees and professional requirements while enhancing their range of courses and thus their academic and professional opportunities.

JD Courses

CUHK LAW structures the JD to accommodate the interests both of those who intend to enter the legal profession and those who are reading the JD for other reasons. The JD comprises a mixture of required and elective courses:

(i) Required courses

- Legal System
- Legal Research, Analysis and Writing
- Comparative Legal Studies#
- Ethics and Jurisprudence
- Independent Research* OR Independent Research Dissertation*

Students may take *Legal Technologies* to substitute *Comparative Legal Studies*.

* Students must complete either *Independent Research* (3 credits) or *Independent Research Dissertation* (6 credits).

(ii) Elective Courses

(a) Elective Courses Required for admission to the PCLL Programme

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| - Principles of Administrative Law | - Principles of Equity and Trusts |
| - Principles of Commercial Law | - Principles of Evidence |
| - Principles of Company Law | - Principles of Land Law |
| - Principles of Constitutional Law | - Principles of Property Law |
| - Principles of Contract | - Principles of Tort |
| - Principles of Criminal Law | |

(b) Other Elective Courses

The Faculty offers an extensive list of electives in the JD (which ones are offered depends on teacher availability and sufficient student interest). Other elective courses include:

- Artificial Intelligence and the Common Law
- Business Taxation: Principles and Practice
- Chinese Civil Law
- Chinese Company Law
- Chinese Contract Law
- Chinese Environmental Law
- Chinese Intellectual Property Law
- Chinese Law and Society in an Age of Digital Technologies and Artificial Intelligence
- Chinese Law on Corporate Finance
- Chinese Securities Regulation
- Chinese Tax Law
- Clean Technology Law
- Colonial Governance and the Rule of Law

- Common Law: Origins and Development
- Conflict of Laws
- Conflicts in International Commercial Litigation
- International and Comparative Energy Law
- International and Comparative Intellectual Property Law
- International Commercial Arbitration
- International Environmental Law
- International Financial and Banking Law
- International Investment Law Policy and Development
- International Legal Advocacy I
- International Legal Advocacy II
- International Taxation
- Issues in Contract
- Issues in Human Rights
- Issues in Tort
- Law and Literature
- Law and Practice of Investment Arbitration
- Law of International Business Transactions I
- Law of International Business Transactions II
- Legal System and Methods in China
- Legal Technologies
- Merger Control
- Principles of Art, Antiquities, Cultural Heritage and the Law
- Principles of Civil Procedure
- Principles of Competition Law
- Principles of Corporate Insolvency
- Principles of Criminal Procedure
- Principles of Digital Technology and Law
- Principles of Employment Law
- Principles of Environmental Law
- Principles of Family Law
- Principles of Insurance Law
- Principles of Intellectual Property
- Principles of International Law
- Principles of Mediation
- Principles of Revenue Law
- Principles of Securities Regulation
- Principles of Unjust Enrichment
- Private International Law in China
- Project Finance and Infrastructure Law
- Shipping Law
- The Law of Electronic Commerce
- The Law of the Digital Economy
- Trans-national Legal Problems
- Water Law
- World Trade Law

5. Student intake

The JD has proved to be a highly competitive programme. In the 2024-25 academic year, the programme received 797 applications meeting minimum admission requirements (628 applications for full-time mode and 169 applications for part-time mode). The admission requirements in section 3 above, are minimum requirements. In the 2024-25 intake, CUHK LAW did not offer places to a large proportion of applicants who satisfied these. The JD attracts students of the highest quality, and the student body is a rich and diverse mixture of well-educated fresh graduates and seasoned professionals who have already achieved considerable success in their fields. In 2024 CUHK LAW admitted 190 students, these being the top segment of applicants.

No. of applications received for academic year 2024-25 (full-time mode)	682
No. of students admitted for academic year 2024-25 (full-time mode)	122
No. of applications received for academic year 2024-25 (part-time mode)	204
No. of students admitted for academic year 2024-25 (part-time mode)	68

All JD students admitted in 2024-25 hold at least an Upper 2nd bachelor's degree or a credit master's degree (or equivalent):

Band 1	22% (41)
Band 2	34% (65)
Band 3	44% (84)
Total	100% (190)

Band 1: 1st class bachelor's degree; or Cumulative GPA 3.5 (4-point scale) where no class of honours awarded; or PhD; or equivalent.

Band 2: Borderline 1st class bachelor's degree; or Cumulative GPA 3.4 (4-point scale) where no class of honours awarded; or master (Distinction); or equivalent.

Band 3: Upper 2nd class bachelor's degree; or Cumulative GPA 3.2-3.3 (4-point scale) where no class of honours awarded; or master (Credit); or equivalent.

As noted above, many JD students take the Programme to help them in their existing careers or to enhance their skills; they have no intention of entering the legal profession. Most part-time students are professionals with qualifications. These include qualifications such as Accredited General Mediator (HKMAAL), Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist (CAMS), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Chartered Engineer (CEng), Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), Registered Medical Practitioner(RMP),

Registered Nurse (RN), Registered Physiotherapist (RP) and Registered Social Worker (RSW).

Some students are members of professional bodies. These include Fellow in General Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (FRCS), Fellow of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong (FCSHK), Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (FHKAM), Member of The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (MHKIE) and Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE) or registered professional in various disciplines for instance in medical and engineering.

In 2017 CUHK LAW and the CUHK Business School jointly introduced the BBA-JD Double Degree Programme. In 2024-25, the BBA-JD Programme admitted 31 year one students. Students in the BBA-JD Programme must achieve a second upper class honours in their BBA to be eligible to enroll in the JD. In July 2024, we had 12 BBA-JD students graduated from the Programme.

In 2018 CUHK LAW and The Dickson Poon School of Law of the King's College London (KCL) jointly introduced the Dual LLB-JD Degree Programme. Students in the LLB-JD Programme must satisfactorily complete all the KCL LLB Degree requirements for graduation and obtain an overall result which is equivalent to a Second Class Honours Upper Division and achieve a minimum CGPA of 2.0 in all JD courses taken at CUHK in the third year in order to be eligible to enroll in the JD. In 2024-25, 4 students from LLB-JD Degree Programme had completed their first 2-year studies at KCL and are now taking CUHK JD courses as Associate Students in their third year of studies. In July 2024, we had 1 LLB-JD student graduated from the Programme.

In 2020 CUHK LAW and The University of Exeter Law School (Exeter) jointly introduced the Dual LLB-JD Degree Programme. Students in the LLB-JD Programme must satisfactorily complete all the Exeter LLB Degree requirements for graduation and obtain an overall result which is equivalent to a Second Class Honours Upper Division and achieve a minimum CGPA of 2.0 in all JD courses taken at CUHK in the third year in order to be eligible to enroll in the JD. In 2024-25, 1 student from LLB-JD Degree Programme is taking courses in her final year of studies at CUHK JD.

6. Library

Given the centrality of law reports, ordinances and scholarly writings to the study of law, the Faculty places great emphasis on its library resources. The Lee Quo Wei Law Library contains over 124,594 volumes and access to over 6,181 electronic law journals. There are 103 electronic legal databases available to students and staff. Wherever possible electronic format is the preferred option for books, law journals and serials. The Faculty is investing heavily in library materials to support future years of its law programmes.

The Lee Quo Wei Law Library houses the main law collection. The Legal Resources Centre (LRC) at the Graduate Law Centre (GLC), where JD teaching takes place, contains a short loan collection and a small collection of law reports and reference materials. CUHK LAW retains a daily courier service that provides research materials students need at the GLC.

The Law Library has developed an extensive array of resource guides and indices that are accessible via the Library website. Both locations provide reference services. CUHK LAW also includes Information Literacy in the JD curriculum.

7. Physical accommodation

CUHK LAW teaches the JD at the GLC in Central. The GLC, covering 35,000 sq. feet, includes three lecture theatres, a state-of-the-art-moot court, small breakout rooms, multi-purpose classrooms, dedicated computer facilities and its Legal Resources Centre. The GLC's location in Central has proven ideal for organising events with practitioners in the legal profession. Throughout the year, the JD students benefit from a wide offering of talks, information sessions and other events with prominent law firms, barristers' chambers, as well as members of the judiciary, government departments and other members of the legal industry.

8. Concluding Remarks

The CUHK JD is now a well-established feature of the Hong Kong legal education landscape. JD students routinely receive job placement offers from top international and local law firms. Many undertake pupillage and develop careers at the Hong Kong bar. Some move on to further studies, often competing strongly in the world's most venerated universities (among them Oxbridge and the Ivy League). Others embark on or continue careers in other walks of Hong Kong or overseas. These fields include banking, commerce, academia and government. JD students are, as a whole, highly qualified and highly motivated. Classes are interactive, with students bringing expertise and experience to enrich the learning environment, both within and outside the classroom. Student satisfaction with the JD, which the University's Centre for Learning Enhancement and Research independently monitors, is very high. Students on the JD have taken the initiative to set up the Graduate Law Students Association and organised activities, which the Faculty supports, to benefit the student body. Mooting teams including JD students represent the Faculty at both regional and international competitions and have achieved outstanding results.

Some JD students will not choose a career in law. They continue to contribute to their respective professions – among them banking and finance, government, journalism and academia – and are all the better armed with all they have learned during their JD education.

Some JD students will choose to continue their studies in the PCLL Programme. In 2024-25, 104 JD graduates applied for admission to the CUHK PCLL Programme and 77.9% of them were successful. Those who progress to the PCLL have a great deal to offer the legal profession. They will continue to help answer the call in the Redmond Roper Report for increased diversity of practitioners in Hong Kong.

Elliot Fung
JD Programme Director
Faculty of Law
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
February 2025

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Law**

Report on the PCLL Programme

(January to December 2024)

2023/2024 PCLL Programme

1. Admission and Completion Rates

In the 2023 intake, we admitted 150 students to the PCLL. Adding one student who was approved to suspend studies in 2022/23 to the cohort, there were initially 151 students. Of these 151 students, three were approved to defer studies to the 2024-25 academic year. The remaining **148** students successfully completed the PCLL. The pass rate is a reflection of the quality of the students admitted to the Programme.

2. Programme Delivery

The teaching site for the 2023/24 Programme was our Graduate Law Centre in the Bank of America Tower, in Central. The Graduate Law Centre offers students a high quality learning environment. In addition to a Moot Court, we have a number of interactive lecture theatres and classrooms. These are all equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. There are also a number of breakout rooms available for student study and discussion. We retained the teaching model of a combination of Large Group Sessions and Small Group Sessions (LGSs and SGSs), as this has proved so effective in the past.

The same five core courses, as in previous years, were offered in Term One, namely: Professional Practice; Commercial Practice; Property and Probate Practice; Civil Litigation Practice; and Criminal Litigation Practice.

Thirteen elective courses were offered in Term Two/Summer Term. Out of these, the students had to select and complete five courses. The thirteen courses offered were: Writing and Drafting Litigation Documents*; Conference Skills and Opinion Writing*; Lending and Finance; Corporate Finance; Writing and Drafting Litigation Documents (in Chinese); China Practice; Writing and Drafting Commercial Documents (in Chinese); Alternative Dispute Resolution; Trial Advocacy*; Writing and Drafting Commercial Documents; Personal Injuries Practice*; Family Law Practice* and Legal Practice and Technology.

Those students intending to enter pupillage as a barrister are required to study Trial Advocacy and two out of the other four Bar electives, marked above with asterisks. These five Bar electives are not confined to intending barristers. Many intending solicitors also chose to study one or more of these courses.

With the exception of those teaching the Chinese language parts of the two Chinese drafting electives, nearly all teachers on the PCLL Programme are or have been practising lawyers. Throughout all of the courses, the emphasis was on the teaching of skills, and on the students' "learning by doing". On all courses the students were first taught skills which they would

need in legal practice. They then practised those skills themselves in class exercises. Finally, they were assessed on those skills.

The PCLL Programme is rigorous. The students have to balance their time between different courses. In doing so they learn time management skills, which will be vital to them in practice.

3. Student Diversity

The PCLL 2023/24 had a diverse student body. Of the 150 students admitted, 136 held local law qualifications while 14 held non-local law qualifications. Their academic backgrounds are as follows:

Law Qualifications	No. with overseas qualifications	No. with local qualifications	Total no. of students
Bachelor of Laws (LLB)	9	53	62
Juris Doctor (JD)	0	83	83
Bachelor of Arts in Law	5	0	5

While most of our students were local, we also had a number of students from the Mainland, who had qualified for admission by way of our Juris Doctor Programme, along with students who had studied for their law degrees in the UK.

4. Oversight by the Professions

With the exception of Trial Advocacy, each PCLL course has assigned to it one or two external course assessors (ECAs), from the Law Society and the Bar Association. Both ECAs see the assessment papers before they are finalized. They are also sent a selection of marked answer scripts for review. These include all borderline and failed scripts, along with some of the highest-scoring scripts. Some of the Law Society ECAs attend Large Group and Small Group sessions of their choice. They provide written reports to the Law Society and to the Faculty on the teaching they have observed and the course materials used in the classes. The PCLL Director carefully studies their comments and passes them on to the teachers involved.

Students also give feedback on the courses and their teachers which is assessed by the Faculty with follow-up action taken if deemed necessary.

5. Contribution by the Judiciary and the Professions

We are also very fortunate to have the support of members of the judiciary and senior practitioners. By way of example, in our Trial Advocacy course in May 2024 we staged a demonstration of a trial held before a Deputy District Judge, in Cantonese. In this demonstration, two members of the Bar (also CUHK LAW alumni) acted as the advocates.

We have also had throughout the years numerous guest speakers from the judiciary and both branches of the profession. The teaching staff and the students greatly appreciate their contribution.

6. Placement of the 2024 Graduates

Our graduates in all sixteen years have been consistently placed in all areas of the legal profession following graduation. Our latest placement survey results comprise 99 student responses out of 148 graduates of the 2023/2024 cohort. The results show that 85% have been employed by law firms, the Department of Justice, have found places in sets of barristers' chambers, or have chosen to pursue further academic studies.

2024/2025 PCLL Programme

Admissions for 2024/2025

The Faculty received 271 applications to study for the PCLL in the academic year 2024/25. The Faculty made 162 offers which were accepted by 152 applicants. Of those accepting the offers, 146 were able to satisfy the pre-conditions and be admitted to the PCLL. Including three students who had been approved to defer studies to the 2024/25 academic year and excluding four students who were approved to defer studies to the 2025-26 academic year, the 2024/25 PCLL intake accordingly comprises **145** candidates.

With effect from the 2020-21 intake, we started to offer an alternative route to admit a limited number of PCLL candidates who have a law qualification supplemented by evidence of law-related working experience. In the academic year 2023-24, three out of three eligible applicants were admitted and passed the PCLL. Three students were admitted through the alternative route in the academic year 2024-25. We will continue to monitor the performance of students admitted to the PCLL through this route.

Conclusion

We believe that the emphasis we place on the acquisition of skills throughout the Programme produces graduates who will be useful and professional members of a legal team, from the very first day of their traineeship or pupillage. The feedback we have had from the professions on the quality of our PCLL graduates whom they have taken on as trainees or pupils bears this out.

We now have sixteen years of past PCLL intakes to build upon. We shall continue to develop and improve our Programme, so that our graduates will be able to meet the future challenges of legal practice in Hong Kong.

Dennis Hie
PCLL Programme Director
Faculty of Law
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
February 2025

Annexure 5



Department of Law The University of Hong Kong

Report on the LLB and JD Programmes to the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training

(January to December 2024)

This year, the Faculty adopted its new unitary structure, thus doing away with the Department of Law as a separate administrative entity. Administrative and teaching responsibilities which formerly fell within the jurisdiction of the Department of Law now fall to the Faculty as a unitary whole. The responsibilities of the former Head of the Department of Law have consequently been broadly taken up by the Associate Dean (Teaching Management) and the Assistant Dean (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes). This year also saw the introduction of a revised LLB curriculum, along with consequential revisions to our Faculty's integrated double-degree programmes with our HKU and overseas partners. We believe these changes to the LLB curriculum will continue to enhance our ability as a Faculty to provide high-quality in-class teaching and learning to our students, both at undergraduate level, and also in relation to our JD programme. We are pleased to report that these significant new developments – adoption of a unitary Faculty structure and revision of the LLB curriculum – have largely progressed satisfactorily.

1. Admissions 2024-2025

The Bachelor of Laws (LLB) remains the flagship programme of the Faculty of Law, and the core around which both the LLB and our integrated double-degree undergraduate programmes are structured. It continues to attract and admit the best and brightest students in the face of keen competition both locally and abroad. Together, the LLB and integrated double-degree undergraduate programmes remain signature programmes of HKU, international recognition of which is evidenced once again by our robust admission figures.

The LLB consistently ranks among the top undergraduate programmes at HKU and among the most competitive programmes across all tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. It continues to attract excellent students admitted through both the local Diploma of Secondary Education (DSE) scheme (JUPAS) and the non-Joint University Programmes Admissions Scheme (non-JUPAS) routes.

In addition to our flagship LLB programme, the Faculty continues to attract top students to our double-degree and double pathway programmes, which variously give students a wider range of interdisciplinary or international study options. Our interdisciplinary study options have offered students integrated studies over many years in business and law (via our BBA(Law) & LLB programme, jointly offered with HKU's Faculty of Business and

Economics), politics and law (via our BSS(Govt&Laws) & LLB programme, jointly offered with the Department of Politics and Public Administration within the Faculty of Social Sciences), and arts and law (via our BA & LLB programme, jointly offered with the Faculty of Arts). These programmes were supplemented in 2022, when we introduced interdisciplinary studies in science and law via our BSc & LLB Programme. This programme, which commenced with an initial cohort of 12 students, has grown each year, and drew a strong cohort of 27 students in the current academic year, with new students taking a wide range of science majors.

Predominant among our Faculty's international study options is our 4-year dual LLB programme with University College London (UCL), which enables students to obtain an LLB degree from both UK and Hong Kong providers when they graduate. Interest in Chinese law led to our 5-year dual LLB programme with Peking University (PKU) Law School, which has been in place since 2019-2020.

We also continue to offer pathways programmes with overseas providers, including King's College London (KCL), whereby students are able to obtain an LLB at HKU followed by an LLM at KCL. Similar arrangements have been made with the University of New South Wales (UNSW), the National University of Singapore (NUS), and the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), buttressing HKU's established reputation for international excellence. Looking to the future, the Faculty will continue to explore new options in this arena.

In 2024, admissions to our LLB programme consolidated, after substantial increases in the previous two admission periods, reinforcing our traditional strength as the premier legal education provider in Hong Kong. A total of 114 students were admitted in 2024 to our undergraduate LLB programme: 52 through the JUPAS scheme, 61 through the non-JUPAS admissions process (including 8 to the HKU-UCL programme), and one via internal transfer. An additional 12 students were admitted through Mainland recruitment.

Likewise, total admission to our integrated LLB dual-degree programmes remained relatively stable, with 162 students admitted in total to the four dual-degree programmes: 56 to the BBA(Law) & LLB; 47 to the BSocSc (Govt & Laws) & LLB; 32 to the BA & LLB; and 27 to the BSc & LLB.

All these programmes continue to maintain admission standards which, relative to the admission standards both of HKU generally and also our HK competitors, are excellent. The strength and appeal of our LLB programmes is also evidenced by substantial increases this year in application numbers to our LLB and BA & LLB programmes, these being the two undergraduate programmes for which the Faculty has primary admissions responsibilities. Specifically, JUPAS applications placing LLB or BA & LLB in Band A-C rose to 479 (from 329 in 2023-24) for the LLB, and to 139 (from 89 in 2023-24) for the BA & LLB. Non-JUPAS applications similarly increased; with 598 applications to our LLB programme (from 536 in 2023-24), and 180 applications to our BA & LLB programme (from 132 in 2023-24).

Our JD programme also goes from strength to strength. As always, students attracted to this programme come from diverse educational and other backgrounds, with a mix of local and non-local students, and with the latter category including, in particular, significant numbers of students from the Mainland. Following past admission practices, we continue to admit a good number of students with significant professional experience on top of their undergraduate education.

JD admissions figures this year continued to rise to accommodate increasing numbers of candidates with strong academic records or professional backgrounds. In total, we admitted 61 students from over 454 applications (compared to 347 applications in 2023-24). Of these, about one-third are local, and the balance are non-local. Due to increasing numbers of non-local students, the Faculty enhanced its orientation and student engagement activities for JD students over this past year, to ensure a smooth and welcoming transition to HKU and to the JD programme.

Exchange

The Faculty of Law highly values its long-established academic links with 125 major universities in many parts of the world. These links have provided our students with rich opportunities to participate in a variety of exchange programmes. Several years on from the pandemic, our students have enthusiastically sought out our academic and cultural exchanges. Figures for out-going law students during 2023-24 comprised 98 students, who are participating in either a one-semester or a full year exchange study through University or Faculty-level exchange agreements, with their studies spread over 50 institutions. Figures for out-going law students in 2024-25 have continued to increase and are expected to reach over 110 students over 52 institutions. In-coming students in 2023-24 numbered 97, from 25 partner institutions, with a further reported increase in 2024-25 to 109 students from 32 institutions.

At the postgraduate level, our reciprocal exchange arrangement with Pennsylvania Law School, enabling HKU JD students to spend an extra year at Pennsylvania and earn an LLM degree, has been well received. Under this programme, two HKU JD students were admitted to UPenn's LLM programme, with several UPenn JD students admitted to HKU's LLM programme. We continue to seek out further additional exchange opportunities with even more overseas institutions so that more of our students will have the opportunity of exposure to other legal systems, complementing their HKU-based learning and skills with the necessary skills for complex, cross-border and international legal practice.

Curriculum

In 2024, the Faculty successfully introduced its revised LLB curriculum after a sustained revision process. As previously reported, the objective of this revision was to ensure our undergraduate students are provided with a comprehensive, up-to-date, and responsive curriculum, covering both traditional law subjects, and also courses addressing the challenges posed by technology, by globalization, and by the changing demands of the legal and financial communities. Revision of the LLB curriculum necessitated corresponding revisions to our integrated LLB double-degree programmes, with these revised programmes also being implemented for the 2024-25 cohort. In some instances, the revised LLB curriculum will necessitate parallel teaching streams, for students who commenced their LLB (or dual degree) studies in 2024-25, and for those who commenced their studies prior to 2024-25, to reflect differences in student understanding and skill level. For example, Criminal Law, which has traditionally been a second-year LLB subject, has been added to the revised first-year curriculum. But students who commenced their LLB or double-degree studies prior to 2024-25, and therefore have already completed one or more years of legal study, will complete the subject as a second-year (or later) course, separately from the newly admitted

first-year students.

A further revision involves the broadening of our capstone LLB requirement, from our traditional Mooting and Dispute Resolution course, to a wider range of experiential learning courses, in particular including clinic-based courses. These experiential learning courses are intended to enable students to develop practical skills and to practice ‘law in action’, bringing together all the knowledge and skills accumulated and acquired during their first two or three years of study. The clinic-based courses include our Clinical Legal Education course, the Social Justice Summer Internship (in both Hong Kong and Mainland China), the Global Migration Legal Clinic, the Disability Rights Clinic, and the Law, Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship (LITE) Lab, all of which have been in high demand even before they were added as Capstone options. To meet this prior need, the Faculty successfully recruited a number of full-time teaching-track staff, but we anticipate that more will have to be recruited within the next few years to ensure the Faculty can offer all LLB students the opportunity to engage in a capstone experience which more closely matches their personal and academic interests. Fortunately, the effects of this revision in our capstone requirement will not come fully to fruition until the 2024-25 cohort progress past their first two years of LLB studies, giving the Faculty time to strategically expand its experiential teaching resources.

For some time now, the Faculty has cross-listed some of its LLM elective courses as a means of providing more options for our senior year LLB students (who have a sound GPA), subject to a limit of two such courses. This remains a popular option for such students, especially if they have chosen to specialize in streams dedicated to (i) Chinese law; (ii) commercial, corporate and financial law; and (iii) international trade and economic law, and wish to benefit from LLM teaching in these specialized areas. Approval for cross-listing additional LLM courses has been sought in 2024, and will likely lead to an increase in the availability of such courses in the next academic year. Other students choose to study a minor in another discipline.

During 2024, the Faculty was once again able to offer our LLB students the opportunity to study their compulsory Introduction to the Chinese Legal System course (formerly called ‘Introduction to Chinese Law’) in Shanghai, during the summer semester, rather than at HKU. Building on our successful experience with this option, we continue to actively explore opportunities to collaborate with other mainland universities in other cities for intensive teaching of the same course.

The JD is a two-year programme. The bulk of the programme consists of compulsory courses, covering both the fundamentals of the common law and all core subject areas. It provides students with a breadth and depth of legal knowledge that enables them to gain admission to the PCLL in a comparatively short period of time. In addition to the core subjects, a wide range of electives is available to JD students to fulfill the requirements of taking at least one elective from a variety of Chinese law offerings and one from the “International, Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives in Law” grouping.

Career and Related Advice

The current in-house Career Development Advisor provides individual career advice consultation sessions to our students. In addition, we run a mentorship programme that matches students with the Faculty’s alumni as part of an informal curriculum. Following recent experiences, the Faculty has also adopted additional processes to enhance the ability of

both our administrative and academic staff in identifying and dealing with the needs of students reporting health and related issues. Meeting this challenge will continue to be a focus of attention in the near future.

Staffing

Our academic staff continue to offer an extensive range of electives in our undergraduate programmes, in addition to all core subjects. The Faculty continues to actively recruit academic staff at all levels, both to enhance our overall curriculum offerings, and also to restore or revitalize our teaching capabilities in traditional courses. Eight new academic staff with teaching and research expertise in LLB or JD related subject areas joined the Faculty in 2024, all as professoriate staff. To meet actual and anticipated departures, the Faculty continues actively to advertise for and recruit additional academic staff in 2025.

Conclusion

Our LLB and JD programmes are both well established as among the best law programmes in Hong Kong and abroad. As always, we continue to focus on additional means of maintaining and enhancing the competitiveness of our programmes. The Faculty is alert to the significant challenges facing legal educators in the modern world, and has already implemented changes to our undergraduate curriculum to meet these changing demands of society and to address concerns about job opportunities. We will continue to focus on these issues, while also taking care to ensure the rigour and diversity of teaching will not be compromised. Equally, we continue to look for ways to provide additional support to students in terms of both career advice and general counselling. We look forward to meeting these challenges and to capitalizing on the opportunities that remain ahead.

Professor Michael JACKSON

Assistant Dean (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes), Faculty of Law
February 2025

Report on the HKU PCLL

January – December 2024

Curriculum and Teaching in 2023/24

1. The teaching mode for the HKU PCLL programme continued to be through large group sessions (“LG”s) and small group sessions (“SG”s). All SGs were conducted face-to-face. For pedagogical reasons, we have been utilising technologies in the delivery of some LGs where these were thought to be appropriate by the relevant course coordinator.
2. There was no major change in the 2023/2024 curriculum when compared to that of 2022/2023. For the full-time programme, students were taught the core curriculum: Civil Litigation, Criminal Litigation, Corporate and Commercial Transactions and Property Transactions 1 in the first semester. In the second semester, students on the full-time programme were taught the core Professional Practice and Management course and they had to study 3 electives of their choice. The electives which were available were: Trial Advocacy, Commercial Dispute Resolution, Personal Injury Litigation, Matrimonial Practice and Procedure, Property Litigation, Drafting Commercial Agreements, Property Transactions 2, Listed Companies, China Practice, Wills, Trust and Estate Planning, Use of Chinese in Legal Practice, Financial Regulations and Practice and Employment Law and Practice.
3. The part-time programme is delivered in the same manner as the full-time programme, with the use of common course materials and with the full-time and part-time students of the same course taking the same examinations where possible. The part-time programme is taught over two years. The first semester of the full-time programme is covered in the first year of the part-time programme and the second semester of the full-time programme is covered in the second year of the part-time programme.
4. The programme was taught and coordinated by 17 full-time teachers with a pool of over 50 part-time teachers who are legal practitioners in Hong Kong assisting in the teaching of the small group sessions. In addition, there were a pool of over 50 assessors from the profession who assessed students on advocacy and oral assessments. The programme also employed a pool of over 30 standardised clients on a part-time basis who role-played lay clients in client interview exercises and who assisted course coordinators to assess students on oral communication skills. The Faculty and our students are immensely grateful for the support from of the legal practitioners and the standardised clients who assist with the teaching and assessments on the programme.
5. Mr. Justice Anderson Chow, the Chief External Examiner, gave his comprehensive report on the programme in January 2025. He raised no concerns that required attention. Indeed, he commended that the HKU PCLL Programme “combines legal knowledge and practical skills and is well designed to equip students with the

expertise needed to work in the legal field in Hong Kong”. He also added that he believes the graduates of this programme “are well-prepared to meet the challenges and deliver services required of the legal professions in Hong Kong”.

Assessments in 2023/2024

6. In 2023/24 all written assessments were conducted in-hall and were handwritten. In accordance with usual practice, all assessments (including the assessments’ setting and marking) were supervised by external examiners who were representatives of the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Bar Association.
7. In 2023/2024, 286 full-time students were assessed and 271 of them were awarded the PCLL. This represents a pass rate of 94.8%.
8. In 2023/24, 79 part-time year 2 students were assessed and all of them were awarded the PCLL. This represents a pass rate of 100%.
9. In 2023/24, 113 part-time year 1 students were assessed and 95 students proceeded to their second year of studies in 2024/25. This represents a pass rate of 84%.
10. Among a total of 375 full-time and part-time Year 2 students, the Board of Examiners awarded overall distinction to the top 33 students of the cohort. All except one were full-time graduates. Among the top 20 students, all are HKU law graduates, with an LLB, a mixed-degree LLB or JD.

Admissions 2024/2025

11. There were over 851 applications from 606 applicants, of whom 554 applicants designated HKU as first preference. Since applicants must make separate applications to the full-time and part-time programmes, many of them applied for both.
12. In any year, the HKU PCLL Programme would be able to admit a maximum of 400 students (300 full-time and 100 part-time), if the quality of applicants so warrants.
13. The number of new PCLL students admitted in September 2024 was 288 to the full-time programme and 84 to the part-time programme. These figures exclude the 25 students who are repeating the full-time or part-time programmes.
14. There are a maximum number of 15 discretionary part-time places based on a balance of applicants’ legal knowledge and full-time working experience, as well as interview performance (the work experience route). 13 of those places were filled after interviewing 17 applicants. Two PCLL academic board members, Mr. Edward Chan SC and Mr. Brian Gilchrist, were invited to sit in those interviews.
15. 121 Government-funded full-time places, were allocated on academic merit. HKU law graduates (including JD) took up about 85% of such places. Other categories of applicants, shared the remaining government-funded places of which UK LLB

graduates, who were mostly Hong Kong permanent residents, represented the largest proportion.

16. The following is a breakdown of where the 372 newly admitted students obtained their underlying law qualification:

	No. of applicants	No. of students admitted in 2024/25
HKU LLB, double degree and JD	246	225
CUHK	45	17
City U HK	18	12
UK	64	29
GDL UK	33	19
UoL (LLB)	26	8
HKU SPACE (MMU)	104	56
HKU SPACE (ADLE)	12	3
Australia	8	2
Malaysia	1	1

17. In the 2024/25 admissions process, of the 226 applicants not admitted to the HKU PCLL Programme, 74% were rejected for their failure to meet the eligibility requirements, including incomplete documentation, failure to pass the conversion exams or failure to meet the conditions of the conditional offers.

Looking ahead

18. In 2024/2025 where possible, all written assessments would be conducted in-hall and would be computer-based.
19. The HKU Faculty of Law PCLL Programme Team are committed to continuously improving the PCLL Programme in all aspects. Meanwhile, we continue to seek the co-operation with the profession via the professional bodies, firms and chambers, as well as individual members of the profession for the better development of the HKU PCLL Programme.

Faculty of Law
February 2025

Annexure 6

Key Statistics of the 2024/25 LLB, JD and PCLL Programmes of City University of Hong Kong The Chinese University of Hong Kong The University of Hong Kong

	City University of Hong Kong	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	The University of Hong Kong
No. of Admissions to the LLB Programme	82 (25 JUPAS students, 35 Non-JUPAS local students and 22 non-local students (including 7 Mainland NUEE students))	92 (38 JUPAS students, 48 Non-JUPAS students and 6 Mainland students)	114 (52 JUPAS students, 61 Non-JUPAS students and 1 internal transfer)
No. of Admissions to the JD Programme	125	190 (122 full-time students and 68 part-time students)	61
No. of Admissions to the PCLL Programme	168	145	372 (288 full-time students and 84 part-time students)
No. of Admissions to the Double Law Degree Programmes	32 (14 students in LLB & BBA(Accountancy), 8 students in BSocSc(Criminology) & LLB, and 10 students in BSocSc(Public Policy) & LLB)	32 (31 students in BBA-JD and 1 student in LLB-JD jointly offered with King's College London)	162 (56 students in BBA(Law) & LLB, 47 students in BSocSc(Govt & Laws) & LLB, 32 students in BA & LLB and 27 students in BSc & LLB)

Annexure 7

THE HONG KONG CONVERSION EXAMINATION BOARD

- Chairperson** : The Honourable Madam Justice Maggie POON Man-kay, JA
Court of Appeal of the High Court
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- Mr. Christopher YU
The Law Society of Hong Kong
- Professor Richard WU Wai-sang
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