

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught For Academic Year 2026/27

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	LLM in International Commercial and Business Law
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Modular Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	Full time: one year Part time: commonly 2 years but by agreement up to 5 years on a modular basis
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Horizon Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	Not applicable
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	Fees applicable to students studying at Horizon Campus (Sri Lanka) are regulated by the Sri-Lankan Government and determined by Horizon Campus (Sri-Lanka). Please refer to the Horizon Campus webpages for information on fees in relation to this programme.

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

2. Overview of the Programme

The aim of the LLM in International Commercial and Business Law programme is to provide you with the opportunity to study the legal and regulatory regimes governing responsible international business, cross-border economic activity, trade, investment and the challenges of international dispute resolution. You are encouraged to think critically about specialised issues of contemporary significance within their wider political, economic, or social context. The programme adopts an interdisciplinary focus.

Governments, international institutions, NGOs, businesses and law firms are increasingly looking for individuals capable of dealing with complex issues of international commercial and business law. You have the flexibility to choose whether to complete the entire programme in one year as a full-time student or to take one of our flexible part-time pathways.

Why study International Commercial and Business Law?

There has never been a more exciting time to study international commercial and business law. International commercial and business law finds itself at the forefront of public debates more than ever before. The regulation

of responsible business conduct, global trade wars, financial markets and international sale of goods, electronic commerce, the fight against climate change, or the impact of pandemics on the global economy are all areas in which international commercial and business law plays a major role.

International commercial and business law dominates the activity of transnational corporations, states, intergovernmental institutions, NGOs and individuals. As a result, governments, international institutions, NGOs, businesses and law firms are increasingly looking for individuals capable of dealing with complex issues of transnational law.

Why study International Commercial and Business Law with Keele?

Keele University has a long tradition of academic expertise in the fields of International law and commercially sustainable international businesses. Modules are designed by academic staff with a wide range of expertise and research interests related to UN Sustainable Development Goals. Combined with the teaching team based at Horizon Campus, Sri Lanka, our diverse community of staff from across the world are committed to academic rigour and socially relevant scholarship and research.

Keele University was founded to promote interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary scholarship and makes a distinctive contribution to higher education by emphasising the strength of a broad educational programme. Keele's LLM in International Commercial and Business Law embraces an interdisciplinary approach.

You also have the opportunity to deepen your understanding and theoretical knowledge of the field of international commercial and business law in the context of the dissertation.

3. Aims of the programme

The aims of the LLM in International Commercial and Business Law are to:

- Provide students with a practical and theoretical understanding of the role, nature and functioning of international commercial and business law.
- Encourage students to develop a critical awareness of the legal, social, and political contexts in which transnational corporations operate.
- Develop students' research skills in the context of supervised research on an agreed topic in international commercial and business law and encourage the production of original and creative scholarship.
- Encourage students to develop critical, analytical and problem-solving skills which can be applied to a wide range of legal and non-legal contexts.
- Provide a strong educational foundation that enhances a student's prospects of professional, commercial or academic employment.

4. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding of the legal concepts, principles and theories of international commercial and business law.
- Demonstrate critical awareness of current problems and new insights in the field of international commercial and business law.
- Articulate a clear assessment of differing critical positions, demonstrating skills of judgment and reasoning.

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- Use the specific techniques and methodologies of international legal scholarship.
- Have confidence in identifying and using primary and secondary materials in international commercial and business law.
- Analyse problems arising in international commercial and business law and formulate reasoned and justified legal arguments.

- Think creatively and independently about international commercial and business law issues.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Plan and successfully undertake a large piece of independent research.
- Evaluate and respond to criticism and alternative arguments.
- Apply academic knowledge in a professional context.

Career opportunities

The LLM in International Commercial and Business Law will enable entry into a range of occupations in the governmental, non-governmental or private sector. It provides an ideal basis for those seeking employment as international law practitioners in relevant national and international organisations (government agencies, departments or regulators, UN bodies, NGOs), multinational corporations, or transnational law firms. Equally, the programme will equip you for further study in the form of a postgraduate research programme, such as a PhD, by providing appropriate research training and an introduction to key thinkers and scholarship.

Keele Graduate Attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social, environmental and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

5. How is the programme taught?

Learning and Teaching Methods:

The compulsory modules are weighted at 30 credits (broadly equivalent to 300 hours work of which 30 hours will be contact time), and all are semester-long. Students also undertake the Research Methods and Dissertation module of 60 credits (full year). Before you begin the taught modules, you will be provided with an introduction to studying Law with Keele University via an information pack, pre-programme reading list and induction sessions. During each taught module, you will take part in lectures, tutor-led seminars and discussions, small group exercises, and case studies which will be held online and in-person at Horizon Campus, ensuring flexibility for those managing full time work commitments simultaneously with their studies. Each module is accompanied by extensive independent study and throughout the programme you are encouraged and required to undertake independent reading to both supplement and consolidate the classes and to broaden individual knowledge and comprehension of the subject.

Enabling Learners to Achieve the Stated Learning Outcomes:

You receive initial guidance on how to identify, locate and use materials available in libraries and elsewhere (including electronic sources). Guidelines are provided for the production of coursework assignments and dissertations and these are reinforced by seminars and individual supervision, which focus specifically on essay planning and writing, and research methodology. Detailed written and, if requested, oral feedback is provided on all coursework. There is also time set aside during each module and outside of the modules, if preferred, for you to consult individually with teaching staff and receive guidance and feedback on assessment and module performance.

6. Teaching Staff

The programme is designed and delivered by an international faculty, which has a diverse body of expertise and qualifications in both legal practice and research. Students based at Horizon Campus will be taught by Keele approved Associate Tutors according to module materials and content designed by Keele School of Law staff, who work closely with Associate Tutors to ensure the same standards in teaching are applied to delivery of each module at Horizon Campus.

Individual staff biographies of staff based in the Keele School of Law can be found at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/law/people/>

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme

depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

The academic year typically runs from September to September or January - January, although may start and end later for students studying at Horizon Campus, and is divided into three semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from programme to programme, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions throughout the academic year. Our degree programmes are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

There is one type of module delivered as part of your programme. They are:

- Compulsory modules - a module that you are required to study on this programme;

A summary of the credit requirements per year is as follows.

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 7	180	0	0

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Principles of International Law	LAW-40106	30	Semester 1
International Business Context	MAN-40361	30	Semester 1
International Economic and Commercial Law	LAW-40114	30	Semester 2
International Human Rights Law	LAW-40124	30	Semester 2
Research Methods and Dissertation	LAW-40116	60	Year

The programme is structured around four compulsory modules - Principles of International Law (30 credits), International Business Context (30 credits), International Economic and Commercial Law (30 credits), International Human Rights Law (30 credits) - and Research Methods and Dissertation (60 credits).

Principles of International Law sets the scene for the programme by providing an in-depth introduction to the core principles, structures and categories of public international law. International Business Context offers an insight into a range of economic, political and technological processes that influence and are influenced by international business activities. International Economic and Commercial Law encompasses the study of the theoretical and normative underpinnings of international trade, investment and transnational commercial law. International Human Rights Law explores the concepts of human rights and the legal regimes that have emerged internationally, and the strengths and weakness of human rights law.

You have the flexibility to choose whether to complete the entire programme in one year as a full-time student or to take one of our flexible part-time pathways. Credits cannot be awarded for the dissertation unless all taught modules are successfully completed. Through the flexible part-time pathways, you may choose from the options below. The compulsory module Principles of International Law must be taken in year one.

- Take all 120 credits from taught modules in year one and the dissertation in year two;
- Take 60 credits from taught modules per year for two years and the dissertation in year three;

- Take 30 credits from taught modules per year for four years and the dissertation in year five;
- Take another combination of modules over any period of time up to four years, followed by the dissertation.

Example part-time structure

International Commercial and Business Law		
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
Year 1		
Principles of International Law	International Economic and Commercial Law	N/A
Year 2		
International Business Context	International Human Rights Law	Dissertation

In order to achieve the LLM qualification, you must successfully complete 120 credits of taught modules before producing a dissertation of between 15,000 - 20,000 words. The dissertation module, which includes research training, is worth 60 credits. To achieve an LLM, 180 credits are required. You may begin preparatory work on the dissertation during the taught part of your programme but cannot be awarded credits for the dissertation until you have completed and passed all the taught modules.

If you do not wish to take the dissertation module, you may complete your studies after successfully completing 120 credits of taught modules with a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip), or after completing 60 credits with a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). If you wish to finish after completing only 30 credits you may apply to have those credits applied to a different programme at a later date (depending on the programme).

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Level 7

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding of the legal concepts, principles and theories of international commercial and business law.	Principles of International Law - LAW-40106 International Economic and Commercial Law - LAW-40114 Research Methods and Dissertation - LAW-40116 International Business Context - MAN-40361
Demonstrate critical awareness of current problems and new insights in the field of international commercial and business law.	All modules + dissertation
Articulate a clear assessment of differing critical positions, demonstrating skills of judgment and reasoning.	All modules + dissertation

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Use the specific techniques and methodologies of international legal scholarship.	Principles of International Law - LAW-40106 International Economic and Commercial Law - LAW-40114 Research Methods and Dissertation - LAW-40116 International Human Rights Law - LAW-40124
Have confidence in identifying and using primary and secondary materials in international commercial and business law	All modules + dissertation
Analyse problems arising in international commercial and business law and formulate reasoned and justified legal arguments.	All modules + dissertation
Ability to think creatively and independently about international commercial and business law issues	All modules + dissertatio

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Ability to plan and successfully undertake a large piece of independent research	Dissertation
Ability to evaluate and respond to criticism and alternative arguments about international and commercial law business issues	All modules + dissertation

8. Final and intermediate awards

LLM	180 credits	120 credits from the taught modules at level 7 + 60 credits from the dissertation
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits	You will require 120 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credits	You will require 60 credits at Level 7

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The programme is assessed principally, though not exclusively, through written work.

Written work may be in the form of research essays, final examinations, reports, blog discussions, reviews or reflective portfolios. For 15-credit modules the word count is 3,000-4,000 words. For 30-credit modules the word count is 5,000 words. Through the essays, students demonstrate their understanding of a particular area of international law (or one of the other taught subjects, i.e., human rights/environment/commerce & business) as well as their ability for original thinking and high-level written communication skills. Other written assignments such as blogs and reflective portfolios allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the relevance of international law to current international affairs and their ability to respond to alternative arguments or to reflect on their own learning. The final form of assessment is the dissertation, which is an extended (15,000 - 20,000

words) and in-depth piece of writing that brings together all of the skills that students have learned throughout the programme. Students are supported through formative (non-mark-bearing) assessments throughout the programme. These may take the form of feedback on participation in group discussions, submission of essay plans to tutors for feedback, short reports, group presentations, short online exercises, or mock examinations. Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

Entry criteria for the programme delivered at Horizon Campus in Sri Lanka can be accessed via the Horizon Campus webpages.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found

here: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

13. How are students supported on the programme?

Each student is allocated an Academic Mentor, from the programme team, whose role is to help students to reflect on their progress through the programme, and to provide general academic advice and support. The Academic Mentor is the 'first contact' for all academic matters and can direct students to more specialist support services; they are the student's most important source of information and advice, and are likely to be the person that they have most contact with. Contact is also maintained via electronic tools, and additional meetings can be arranged as appropriate. During the dissertation stage the supervisor will provide advice and feedback on dissertation plans and draft chapters

Should any issues arise that the Academic Mentor cannot assist with, you will be referred to the relevant Horizon Campus or Keele University service.

Keele University services available to you include the counselling services, disability and dyslexia support, international student support and careers and employability, and can be contacted via the Student Services Centre at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-services/>. Students will also be able to contact the Student Experience and Support Officer based in the Keele School of Law for further confidential pastoral support and signposting to wider student support services offered by Keele University in the UK.

14. Learning Resources

The programme is taught through a combination of contact time (both online and in-person), independent study, and web-based learning resources. Self-study materials comprise both traditional text based resources and a range of electronic multimedia resources that will be accessed through the Keele Learning Environment (KLE). This latter resource is also used to enhance student support during the period of the programme and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion. There are also regular research seminars presented by Keele or external staff that take place throughout the academic year and to which postgraduate students are invited. These provide a useful complement to the taught sessions and, for those students considering research degrees, provide an insight into academic research in practice.

Keele University Library:

The Keele library has many resources available online. Further information about the library can be found at:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/>. Students can access the various materials available online. Details on these are available from the Library website: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/library/support/access>.

15. Other Learning Opportunities

a. Exchange Opportunity

It is possible for you to register on a single module (modular programme of study) for Continuing Professional Development or other purposes. You may choose to attend the module without completing the assessment but no credits would be awarded for this. You should contact the postgraduate administrator (law.office@keele.ac.uk) for further information.

There is an active research community within the School of Law and postgraduate students are invited to participate in the wide range of seminars and other research activities, such as workshops and academic conferences held at Keele. A research seminar programme is organised each year, where members of staff present their latest work. There are also other lectures and research seminars organised in other Schools and Research Institutes within Keele University that may be of interest to students. You will be informed of these via their Keele email address.

b. Continuing Professional Development

Legal practitioners who wish to complete a module for Continuing Professional Development purposes only and without completing the assessment are not required to complete the core modules and may exit with zero credits and a certificate of attendance after the module's teaching has been completed. *The Continuing Professional Development Certificate of Attendance* is recognised by the Law Society of England and Wales (for Continuing Professional Development purposes).

16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the Keele School of Law.
- Individual modules and the programme and its delivery through the partnership between Keele and Horizon Campus as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review and annual partnership review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.
- The partnership between Keele University and Horizon Campus is subject to Keele's [Educational Partnerships Code of Practice](#), which sets out how Keele works with its partners and manages the quality and standards of its provision and that of the student experience.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by Keele, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme level and at partnership level between Keele, Keele's School of Law and Faculty of Business, Law, Humanities and Social Sciences, and with Horizon Campus.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

Keele appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/ga/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

18. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

- a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>
- b. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 12 June 2026

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
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