Professional Research, Practice and Advocacy

Module title			
Professional Research, Practice and Advocacy			
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	**Module number / reference**	**ECTS Value**	**Duration**
Level 8 NFQ	LLBH - PRPA	5 ETCS	Semester 1: (12 weeks)
Parent programme(s). Principal programme title, and embedded(s) if relevant		**Stage of parent programme**	**Semester No.**
Bachelor of Laws (Honours)		2	1
Bachelor of Laws (Honours) in Criminal Justice		2	1
Bachelor of Laws (Honours) in Commercial Law		2	1
Teaching and Learning modes	**Proportion** (% of Total Directed Learning)		
Classroom / Face to Face	26%		
Workplace			
Online			
Other (Identify)	74% (Independent Research and Learning)		
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)			
Please see section 4.2 for full details of entry requirements.			
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	Sixty (60)		
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours[1] per week	2		
Pre-requisite module title(s) (if any)	None		
Co-requisite module title(s) (if any)	No		
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No		
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)			
Requirements are for the lecturer to utilise a PC with Microsoft Office, Zoom and access to the internet through which an individual can gain access to the Griffith College student intranet: Moodle. There are no further software requirements for this module. In relation to Microsoft Office the lecturer will require to use PowerPoint or Word to present the information to the learners. Zoom will be required in conjunction with Microsoft Office in order to record the lectures when the module is being delivered for block release or for the Blended Programme when organised in advance. Zoom will also be required for the seminars through which the module will be taught (block release).			
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.			

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[1] Effort while in contact with staff

Role e.g. Tutor, Mentor etc	Qualifications & experience required:	# of Staff with this profile (WTEs[2])
Lecturer	Lecturers expected to hold at least a level 8 legal qualification, preferably with a professional legal qualification. It is an advantage to have completed the Certificate in Education, Learning and Development provided by Griffith College.	0.25 WTE

Analysis of required learning effort		
*Effort while in contact with staff	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours
Classroom and demonstrations	1:60	24
Mentoring and small-group teaching	-	-
Other (specify)	-	-
Independent Learning		
Directed e-learning (hours)		-
Independent Learning (hours)		101
Other hours (specify)		-
Work-based learning hours of learning effort		-
Total Effort (hours)		125

Allocation of Marks					
	Continuous Assessment	Supervised Project	Proctored Practical Exam.	Proctored Written Exam	Total
Percentage Contribution	100%				**100%**

Module aims and objectives

This module aims to impart in learner's written and oral advocacy skills which are central to legal professional training and to enable learners to prepare mock cases and argue the law on behalf of their clients. Following a series of introductory classes, learners will be required to complete a case brief on a module that was picked by the Faculty. Learners will then be asked to draft a written memorial of legal submissions, and then undertake a moot at the conclusion of the module. The module serves to train learners in analysing legal issues and to communicate well about them and to increase learners' abilities to solve problems and to see the practical application of law. Learners get opportunities to demonstrate an understanding of the ethics required to work with the legal sector and the importance of confidentiality and candour, identifying situations in which ethical behaviour and confidentiality apply. The module will require the learner to reflect on their development since commencement of their studies on the programme but mainly on their time in this module to ensure that the learners have achieved what the module intends to achieve with the learners in preparing them for working in the legal profession following their completion of the programme.

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[2] WTE is the whole-time equivalent number. The number 1 indicates a fulltime person fully dedicated to the programme. 0.5 indicates a part-time person available to this programme half of the time.

Minimum intended module learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, learners are able to:

(i)   Critically analyse and apply law to factual scenarios
(ii)   Investigate legal principles through utilisation of library and online research skill
(iii)   Debate and participate with peers on a team
(iv)   Develop written legal submissions
(v)   Produce a skeleton argument and list of authorities
(vi)   Communicate orally legal argument in an effective and persuasive manner
(vii)   Analyse ethical norms to guide their professional practice

Rationale for inclusion of the module in the programme and its contribution to the overall MIPLOs

This module traces its origins to a desire to provide learners with skills and basic competencies in legal work. It also provides learners with skills in oral and written advocacy that will be useful to them whether they choose to enter traditional legal professions, or apply their knowledge in other ways. It also introduces aptitudes necessary a modern workplace, such a group work and presentation skills. Globally, it allows learners to draw upon the theory, skills, and knowledge they have acquired throughout the programme to date, as well as to identify, with the assistance of formative assessment and feedback, areas of strength and in need of improvement, and to make appreciable and demonstrable progress in the development of the above skills.

The Module serves to directly underpin programme-learning outcomes (iii) conceptualising and communicating legal arguments with clarity and precision; and (vi) effectively employ advanced research skills, including use of legal databases, to investigate, interrogate and critique the law. This module re-enforces the module learning outcomes (x) demonstrating independent critical judgment and analytical skills supporting personal and career development and (viii) evaluate and employ interventions and strategies in different contexts to enable agreement and the resolution of disputes through cooperation between parties. This module also directly underpins the Programme Minimum Learning Outcomes (i), (iv), (v), (vii), (ix) and (xi).

Information provided to learners about the module

The learners will have in their possession their Faculty Handbooks from their previous year. The Faculty Handbook provides general information about the faculty, its staffing, resources, and operation. Detailed programme information is supplied through Moodle, including copies of the approved module descriptors from the accredited programme (detailing related teaching, learning and assessment) along with a programme timetable. Another copy will be provided to the learners upon their request.

During the first class of the Module, learners are given a detailed outline of the Module showing the schedule of delivery and the dates when assignments are released and due for submission.

Moodle is used to provide learners with ongoing access to module related information, from the handbooks and module outlines provided in advance of the module commencement, the lecture material and links to related resources provided on a scheduled basis in line with the module delivery.

Module content, organisation and structure

This module is delivered over 12 weeks with two hours of lecture each of those weeks. The subject matter covered in the course is organised into the headings as outlined below.

Professional Ethics
• Professional ethics for solicitors, barristers and legal executives Legal Research
• Introduction to legal research and writing in practice
• Lab session – Online research skills
• Written advocacy and neutral evaluations of the law
• The Importance of structure and readability in reports Trial Advocacy
• Introduction to advocacy
• Analysis of sample memorials
• Analysis of case study in groups
• Production of applicant and respondent memorials
• Preparation of skeleton argument and book of authorities Professional Development
• Developing reflective practical and critical thinking
• Improving concentration and active learning
• Analytical reading and critical analysis
• Academic writing
• Preparing for and presenting effectively
• Problem solving
• Written and verbal communication skills, how to use them

Module teaching and learning (including formative assessment) strategy

The module is delivered by means of participative lectures which consist of tutorial-style discussions, group work sessions and exercises. Learners also engage with legal materials in the course of preparing oral and written advocacy. Formative assessment is provided tough tutorial-style discussion, group work and exercises focus on specific case law and problem-based learning as well as mooting exercises requiring the learner to analyse the law and apply it circumstances that simulate the actual skills and considerations involved in the practice of law. The lectures are supplemented by structured on-line resources and reading.

Learners are encouraged to engage in reflective practice throughout the duration of the module and to analyse the materials used in the module through the lens of their own experiences and to make critical judgments regarding the desirable course of action in a given scenario or the proper legal theories and arguments to be advanced in the resolution of a legal question.

Learners undertaking the course via blended learning benefit from varied and additional options for engagement to compensate their reduced attendance of campus. These include webinars, screencasts (recorded lectures), discussion fora, and increased use of the College's VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), Moodle.

Guest lectures and site visits may be incorporated into the module to reinforce concepts. In addition to what has been stated, classroom assessment and benchmarking techniques are deployed to encourage learners to develop more agency in terms of their own learning including in-class presentations, group work, peer-review exercises and reflective practice. The variety of teaching, learning and assessment techniques reflect an enhanced emphasis on skills acquisition to deepen practical knowledge. Finally, the attention of learners is drawn to current industry practice and technology used in the specific area of law to add a further dimension to learning, tracking the actual practice of legal professionals.

Work-based learning and practice-placement

Professional Research, Practice and Advocacy is a class based 5 ECTS credit module and does not require work-based learning and practice placement.

E-learning

Moodle, the College Virtual Learning Environment is used to disseminate notes, advice, and online resources to support the learners. E-learning activities include learner feedback, forums where learners contribute, formative quizzes and video links. The learners will also have access to a number of other online resources through the library such as access to databases and research tools (Westlaw.ie, Westlaw.uk, JustisOne (vLex) and Hein Online) as well as access to online copies of books published from Bloomsbury Online.

Module physical resource requirements

Requirements are for the lecturer to utilise a PC with Microsoft Office, Zoom and access to the internet through which an individual can gain access to the Griffith College student intranet: Moodle. There are no further software requirements for this module. In relation to Microsoft Office the lecturer will require to use PowerPoint or Word to present the information to the learners. Zoom will be required in conjunction with Microsoft Office in order to record the lectures when the module is being delivered for block release or for the Blended Programme when organised in advance. Zoom will also be required for the seminars through which the module will be taught (block release).

Reading lists and other information resources

Primary reading
- *Kee, C. (2006) The Art of Argument: A Guide to Mooting. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press*
- *Richardson, E (2019) A Guide to Mooting in Ireland, Clarus Press*
- *Snape, J. & Watt, G. (2010) How to Moot: A Learner Guide to Mooting. Oxford: OUP*
- *Baskind, E. (2018) Mooting. Routledge*

e-Resources
- *Bloomsbury Professional Online*
- *JustisOne – Vlex*
- *Westlaw.ie*
- *Westlaw UK*
- *Heinonline*
- *Griffith College Library Website*

Specifications for module staffing requirements

Lecturers qualified to at least a Level 8 legal qualification (LLB (Honours), preferably with a professional legal qualification and a third level teaching qualification (e.g. Certificate in Education, Learning and Development offered by Griffith College). Learners also benefit from the support of the Programme Director, Faculty Administrators, a dedicated Learning Technologist

Office, the Learning Supports Office, at least one Learner Representative for each Stage, the Students' Union and a free (off campus) Counselling Service.

Module summative assessment strategy

There are four separate components to the summative assessment for this module. These are:

1. The first element will consist of a Case Study Review which assesses the ability of the learner to investigate a case problem.
2. The second and third elements assess the ability of the learner to marshal their learning and research effectively via groupwork, and for the purposes of written submissions and oral argument, in a moot court scenario.
3. The fourth component assesses learners on the creation of a portfolio of work produced in the module and their ability to reflect on skills they have honed during the course of this module.

The following table indicates the module's learning outcomes' alignment with the assessment used for the module:

No.	Description	MIMLOs	Weighting
1	Case Study Review (1,500 words)	(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vii), (x)	25%
2	Moot (Group Project)	(iii), (iv), (v), (vii), (viii), (x)	25%
3	Written Submission (1,500 words)	(iii), (iv), (v), (vii), (x)	25%
4	Reflective Journal (1,000 words)	(vii), (ix), (xi), (x)	25%

Reassessment/Repeat assessment strategy: Griffith College regulations state that learners must pass all component elements of the module to be deemed to have passed the module.
- In the event of a learner failing components of / this module, they will be required to submit a new individual repeat assignment which will be made available on Moodle to learners, and which must be submitted as per faculty instructions.
- In the event of a learner failing the group assessment element of this module, a new individual repeat assignment will be made available on Moodle to learners which must be submitted as per faculty instructions.
- In the event of the learner failing the exam, learners will take the re-sit exam at the next available sitting, details of which will be made available to learners via Moodle.

Sample assessment materials

Please see sample assessment supplementary document.