

6.1 Module 3: Professional and Academic Preparedness and Skills

Module title			
Professional and Academic Preparedness and Skills			
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	Module number / reference	ECTS Value	Duration
Level 7	DLSP-PAPS	5 ECTS	8 weeks
Parent programme(s) . Principal programme title, and embedded(s) if relevant		Stage of parent programme	Semester No.
Diploma in Legal Studies and Practice		Award Stage	Block 1
Certificate in Legal Practice		Award Stage	Block 1
Teaching and Learning modes	Proportion (% of Total Directed Learning)		
Classroom / Face to Face	20%		
Workplace	-		
Online	-		
Other (Identify)	80% (independent study)		
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)			
Learners must comply with and meet programme entry requirements.			
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	80		
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week	4		
Pre-requisite module title(s) (if any)	n/a		
Co-requisite module title(s) (if any)	n/a		
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No		
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)			
Lecture room with Wi-Fi access, digital recording facilities, Zoom access and digital projector.			
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.			
Role e.g. Tutor, Mentor etc	Qualifications & experience required:	# of Staff with this profile (WTEs)	
Lecturer	Lecturers expected to hold at minimum 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. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.	0.2 WTE	

Analysis of required learning effort		
*Effort while in contact with staff	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours
Classroom and demonstrations	80:1	21
Mentoring and small-group teaching	-	-
Other (specify) – workshop	25:1	4
Independent Learning		
Directed e-learning (hours)	-	
Independent Learning (hours)	100	

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%

6.1.1 Modules aims and objectives

The purpose of the Professional and Academic Preparedness and Skills module is to prepare learners for a role within the legal system in Ireland and legal education. This module aims to impart in learners the requisite written and oral skills that are central to legal professional training.

Learners are taught legal drafting skills, how to analyse 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 demonstrate an understanding of the ethics required to work within the legal sector and the importance of confidentiality, identifying situations in which ethical behaviour and confidentiality apply. Learners are also taught how to engage effectively with clients and other legal professionals through use of interview and negotiation techniques and through writing using efficient note-taking and letter writing skills.

6.1.2 Minimum intended module learning outcomes

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

- (i) Discuss and apply the core provisions, rule and principles of professional ethics and how it relates to other areas of law and society through factual scenarios including relevant Codes of Conduct.
- (ii) Display strong communication, drafting, interview, analyse and negotiation skills.
- (iii) Carry out legal research using online tools and prepare legal research records, complete and draft a legal case analysis, Interpret relevant case law and legislation and accurately reference using OSCOLA.
- (iv) Apply the rules and insure compliance with confidentiality and privilege requirements, General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018, anti-money laundering rules, whistleblowing and protections available.
- (v) Explain the procedure for the operation of client, office and VAT accounts and draft financial correspondence.

6.1.3 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 knowledge, skills and basic competencies in both legal work and legal studies. It also provides learners with the skills that are useful to them whether they choose to enter traditional legal professions, continue their legal education, or apply their knowledge in other ways. It also introduces knowledge and aptitudes necessary in a modern workplace, such as group work and presentation skills.

Globally, it allows learners to draw upon the theory, skills, and knowledge they acquire throughout the module and through their external experience, 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. In that context, this module supports the achievement of MIPLO III.

In addition to soft skills, the module provides learners with an overview of the history and development of ethics; codes of conduct of legal professionals; the law as it pertains to data protection, anti-money laundering and whistleblowing amongst other core areas of legal knowledge. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO I.

The module introduces learners to effective methods of legal research and writing and the art of conveying legal argument by way of negotiation. Learners are given the opportunity to apply their legal knowledge in workshops and assignments which demand analysis of fact-specific scenarios and the provision of advice to fictional clients. One of the components is a Case Study, which requires learners to advise a fictional client, based on an analysis of case law and relevant legislation. The Workshop in this module also includes a Negotiation, where learners are expected to argue with clarity and precision. In that context this module supports the achievement of the MIPLO II.

As a practical module, PAPS requires learners to critically evaluate applicable legal sources and apply them in pursuit of solutions to specific legal problems outlined in both the Module Workshop and Assignment. Learners are required to apply relevant law to a fact-based Case Study, which is a standalone assessment component on the module. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO IV.

The module also introduces learners to the skills involved in interviewing clients, legal research and communicating said research to their principal solicitor, how to effectively note-take and letter write and how to case manage files. Learners get opportunities to demonstrate an understanding of the ethics required to work with the legal sector and the importance of confidentiality, identifying situations in which ethical behaviour and confidentiality apply. In addition learners learn how to engage effectively with clients and other legal professionals through use of interview and negotiation techniques and through writing using efficient note-taking and letter writing skills. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO V.

Learners are required to partake in group work via the Workshop (Interview and Negotiation). In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VI.

By receiving feedback on all summative and formative assessments, learners are enabled to evaluate and reflect on their work, thereby facilitating improvement. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VII.

The formative and summative assessments adopted require legal argument, meaning the recording of the learner's own opinion or advices, supported by relevant academic sources or case law/legislation/Constitutional provisions. This is especially so in the case study component. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VIII.

6.1.4 Information provided to learners about the module

Learners enrolled on this module initially receive a copy of the module descriptor, assessment briefs and assessment strategy. These materials are given directly by the lecturer and also by the Programme Director as part of the Learner Handbook for award stage modules of the programme. All content is provided on Moodle as well as access to additional content through the library and online resources.

Online (via Moodle) learners are provided with video recording of each lecture, copy of PowerPoint slides, a module specific manual, extensive reading list, incorporating professional and academic and non-academic sources. Guest lectures will be introduced to ensure practical knowledge and real-life examples will keep the content relevant.

6.1.5 Module content, organisation and structure

This module is informed by the following content:

Lecture 1 (4 hours) 16%

Introduction to Ethics
Codes of Conduct
Reflective Journals
Study Strategy, Note Taking and Time Management

Lecture 2 (4 hours) 16%

Effective Oral Communication (Client Consultation)
Negotiation
Legal Case Analysis
Referencing – OSCOLA

Lecture 3 (4 hours) 16%

Client Confidentiality
Privilege
Data Protection
Privacy
Legal Research and Research Records

Lecture 4 (4 hours) 16%

Anti-Money Laundering
Disciplinary Procedures
Whistleblowing
Finances in Legal Offices
Financial Correspondence

Lecture 5 (4 hours) 16%

Preparing for and interviewing a client.
Drafting Instructions and Memos
Mock interviews and negotiations
Reviewing your Reflective Journal

Workshop Preparation (1 hour) 4%

Preparation for Workshop including Case Review and Client Instructions.

Workshop (4 hours) 16%

Negotiation exercise
Client Interview
Memo drafting

6.1.6 Module teaching and learning (including formative assessment) strategy

The Professional and Academic Preparedness and Skills module is delivered through a series of lectures, through tutorial-style discussions, group work sessions and exercises, and supplemented by structured web-based resources and reading; and also involves one practical workshop.

This module comprises of 21 contact hours, being 15 lecture hours, five tutorial hours and one revision/exam preparation class, and one four-hour workshop. Each class is three hours of lectures and a one-hour tutorial. Tutorials include, class discussions, group work sessions and exercises.

Lectures and tutorials are supplemented by structured web-based resources and reading. The workshop is an interactive, group discussion based assessment, with learners required to engage in interview, negotiation and drafting exercises.

6.1.7 Work-based learning and practice-placement

There is no work-based learning or practical placement in the module.

6.1.8 E-learning

Griffith College uses Moodle, a virtual learning environment, to support its delivery of e-learning activities in the form of peer-to-peer support based around activities where learners give and receive feedback, forums where learners must contribute, formative quizzes and video links.

6.1.9 Module physical resource requirements

Requirements are for a fully equipped classroom. The classroom has Wi-Fi access and is equipped with a PC with Zoom and Microsoft Office. In addition the classroom has digital recording facilities and digital projector. No other software is required for this module. The College library has a dedicated law section and also online legal research tools including Justice One, Westlaw, Hein Online.

6.1.10 Reading lists and other information resources

Primary reading

Code of Conduct for the Bar of Ireland (adopted 25th July, 2016)

IILEX Code of Professional Conduct

IILEX Disciplinary Procedure

Law Society, A Guide to Good Professional Conduct for Solicitors, 3rd Edition (2013, Law Society)

Legal Services Regulation Act 2015

O'Callaghan, The Law on Solicitors in Ireland, (2000, Butterworth Ireland Ltd.)

Solicitors Acts 1954-2011

6.1.11 Specifications for module staffing requirements

Lecturers expected to hold at minimum 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. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.

6.1.12 Module summative assessment strategy

Theoretical knowledge is assessed throughout the module by submission of a Case Study Assignment (worth 40%), a Reflective Journal (worth 10%) and a Workshop (worth 50% of the overall grade). The use of the continuous assessment methods above reflect the practical nature of this module, which is best assessed by way of practical assessment.

Each class is three hours of lectures and one-hour tutorial. Tutorials include: class discussions, group work sessions and exercises by way of formative assessment, which supports the summative assessment strategy. The following table indicates the module's learning outcomes' alignment with the assessment used for the module:

No.	Description	MIMLOs	Weighting
1	Case Study	(i) to (v)	40%
2	Workshop	(i) to (iii)	50%
3	Reflective Journal	(i) to (v)	10%

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.

6.1.13 Sample assessment materials

Please see sample assessment supplementary document.