**Newcastle Law School**

**Non-Law Modules Information for PGT students**

**Overview**

All PGT students have the option of selecting ‘non-law’ modules – that is to say, modules taught in other departments belonging to Newcastle University – subject to the approval of the Degree Programme Director Team. The policy for approval is as follows.

Non-law modules selections will only be approved if (1) the modules are comparable to Law School modules in terms of their substance (e.g. on academic rigour, credit volume and assessment mechanisms); (2) the selection works in procedural terms (e.g. module leader permission, prerequisites, timetabling and credit balancing – see module selection form) and (3) the applicant has complied with the process for selecting non-law modules. See headings 1, 2 and 3 below respectively for more detail.

**Rationale**

Many students come on to the taught LLM from other discipline backgrounds and may wish to continue with some aspects of prior learning, or they may wish to combine the study of legal subjects with other complementary subjects for future career purposes, or because of interest, or because they want a more rounded, interdisciplinary post-graduate experience. All of these are sound and positive reasons for wanted to combine non-law modules into the master’s programme of study and we encourage interdisciplinary study.

**1. Substantive Comparability to Law Modules**

*(a) Level*

Non-law modules must be of a comparable FHEQ level ie offered at post-graduate level for a degree, usually indicated by module number 8XXX

*(b) Weight*

Non-law modules must be of similar weight to law modules carrying an equivalent number of credits ie 20 credits.

*(c) Assessment*

The Law School has discretion to determine which assessment methods are comparable to law assessment methods.

**2. Procedural Requirements**

*(a) Permission*

Students must seek the prior approval of the Module Leader for each non-law module they wish to join. Written evidence of Module Leader approval must be kept (usually an email) so that it can be attached to the application form. Students must also seek LawSchool approval (granted by the PGT Degree Programme Director) before taking a particular non-law module. The Law School does not maintain a list of pre-approved non-law modules. Modules can change year on year, making it necessary to verify their suitability afresh each academic year.

The onus is on the student to carry out an initial self-assessment regarding the suitability of non-law modules.

*(b) Prerequisites*

Students are not usually allowed to take a module with pre-requisites they do not meet. The exception is where the Module Leader expressly consents to waive the pre-requisite. The Module Leader’s consent should be attached to the Non-Law Module Approval Form when it is submitted to the Law School. Students choosing to take a module on this basis do so at their own risk and should be aware of the risks of doing so.

Not all modules list prerequisites. However, there may still be challenges associated with taking a module at master’s level in a discipline where the student has no background. The forms of assessment in different schools may also be unfamiliar which can present its own difficulties; the language of the discipline may be different; and the focus may be geared towards meeting certain professional criteria. Students should therefore speak with the Module Leader as early as possible. In this regard it can be useful to enquire if certain background reading should be undertaken prior to the start of the module.

*(c) Timetabling*

Students may not take a non-Law module if there is a clash with a law module lecture. If there is a clash with a seminar group, the Law School will attempt to move a student to a non-clashing seminar group, but the student will only be permitted to take the non-Law module if there are no clashes. There is no exception to this rule. It is the responsibility of students to check for timetabling clashes.

*(d) Semester weightings*

Students on the LLM programme study a total of 180 credits. Of this, students have to choose a total of 120 taught credits, with dissertations weighing 60 credits. The University rules on semester weightings are that the taught element credit split should as far as possible be balanced across the two teaching semesters (i.e. 60 credits in each semester). The University rules on semester weightings are that the credit split should as far as possible be balanced across the two teaching semesters. A balance also makes sense in terms of study hours and assessment spread.

**3. Process**

For formal approval, students **must** adhere to the following process:

1. Verify that the module meets the substantive requirements in section 1 above;
2. Verify that the module meets the procedural requirements in section 2 above;
3. Complete the Non-Law Module Approval Form ensuring **all fields** are completed and that **all evidence** (approval emails**,** pre-requisite waiver emails etc.) is **attached**;
4. Email the Non-Law Module Selection Form to gemma.hayton@ncl.ac.uk who will pass this to the DPD team.
5. Applications that do not adhere to the prescribed process will not be approved.

If the student’s chosen module is not formally approved, students can either apply for other non-law modules, or for optional modules within the law school.

**Any queries on the above should be directed to: gemma.hayton@ncl.ac.uk**