



LLM in **Human Rights Law**



The LLM in Human Rights Law programme is being offered by the Transitional Justice Institute (TJI) in conjunction with the School of Law

LLM in Human Rights Law

This programme has been developed to enable students to:

- Gain an in-depth knowledge of the theoretical and practical application of human rights law.
- Understand the particular human rights issues in conflicted and transitional societies.
- Gain knowledge and skills in carrying out research projects from design to write-up.
- Enhance skills in critically appraising published and commissioned research.
- Develop skills highly relevant to legal practice, and to policy, research and advocacy roles in the voluntary, public and private sectors in the UK, Ireland and beyond. Successful completion may also open up a range of further study and research options.

Unique Selling Points

The Transitional Justice Institute in Northern Ireland is uniquely placed to deliver an effective and stimulating programme of study in this area. The LLM programme enables students to:

- Gain unique insights into the legal protection of rights in transitional contexts, while studying in a society currently in a process of transition.
- Take advantage of the opportunities to specialise in identified areas e.g. human rights, transitional justice, peace and conflict research in divided societies.
- Enhance the skills you need for working with human rights in a range of sectors.
- Apply for Internship opportunities with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Disability Action, and the Law Centre (NI).

Programme and Module Content

LLM students must complete the following 3 compulsory modules:

- **Foundations of International Human Rights Law (30 credit points):** This module is designed to provide students with a sophisticated analysis of the legal and political structures governing human rights law and its enforcement at the international level. Students are given the opportunity to apply that legal and structural knowledge to contemporary problems facing domestic and international human rights mechanisms.
- **Foundations of Transitional Justice (30 credit points):** This module aims to provide students with an in-depth analysis of the emerging field of 'transitional justice'. Students will relate the dilemmas of societies in transition from violent conflict and/or authoritarian regimes to the imperatives of international human rights law and

international humanitarian law. There will also be an opportunity to apply that legal and structural knowledge to contemporary situations of armed conflict and transition.

- **Dissertation (60 credit points):** The completion of a 15,000 word dissertation provides students with an opportunity to further pursue their own research interests, and to produce an original and theoretically-informed piece of work of publishable standard which relates to issues studied in at least one of the taught modules.

PLUS 4 optional half-modules (15 credit points each) from a list which may include:

- **Gender and Political Transition:** This module provides an introduction to the interplay between human rights, humanitarian law and feminist theory. It explores the gendered experiences of women in times of conflict, emphasising in particular the harms which women may experience, and accountability for sex based violations. The module follows through with an exploration of the role and visibility of women in the contexts of peace-making, peace-enforcement and transition.
- **Policing and Human Rights:** Policing is a key interface between State and population. How law seeks to impact on and regulate this area is therefore highly significant. This module traces, both domestically (at the community and national levels) and internationally, the actual and potential impact of human rights norms as regards policing provision. Using case studies developed from the research activity of staff members, it allows students to gain practical and theoretical insights into the significance of human rights standards in this area.
- **The Politics of Memory:** This module will enable students to acquire the inter-disciplinary knowledge and skills necessary to master the specialised areas of truth recovery, the social memory of political violence, and dealing with the past (conflict resolution) in post-conflict societies. Students will be encouraged to develop an in-depth and critical understanding of marginalised discourses in transitional societies, and to examine how processes of managing memory can influence the formation of human rights norms.
- **Political Violence, 'Wars on Terror' and the Law:** This module critiques the role of law in situations of political violence and terrorism. It explores not only law's contribution to the repression of violent political actors, but also its potential counter-productive effects. The module examines these debates using jurisdictional case-studies, and focuses on such critical issues as the use of military commissions, extraordinary rendition, and the 'torture' debate.
- **Critical Perspectives on Human Rights:** The moral authority of human rights law is often taken for granted. In fact the philosophical origins of human rights remain a matter of much debate, and differing conceptions of rights can lead to radically divergent interpretations of rights and their contemporary purchase. This theoretically grounded module introduces students to a range of detailed critiques of human rights, and students will be encouraged to identify and question the underlying assumptions of international human rights law.
- **Economic, Social & Cultural Rights:** This module provides an opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of policy and legal challenges faced in the realization of economic, social and cultural rights and to enhance and practice appropriate skills in researching and applying these rights. It focuses on topical issues such as the lack of the justiciability of economic, social and

cultural rights, the role of non-state actors, and the influence of the international trade and intellectual property rights regimes on the realization of these rights.

- **Equality Law:** This module introduces students to core principles of equality law. Whilst focusing on the law of Northern Ireland, the module has a strong comparative and international dimension and will examine developments in, for example, Europe, South Africa and Canada. The concepts of non-discrimination and equality will be explored, as will their enforcement over the key grounds, and the future development of equality law.
- **Globalization, Development & Human Rights:** This module examines the interaction between the current movement of economic globalisation and human rights law by analysing to what extent human rights laws apply to the main actors of globalisation such as international financial institutions or multinational corporations. It also examines the relevance of human rights law to key issues such as poverty reduction, environmental degradation, and contemporary forms of slavery.
- **Human Rights and Conflict Resolution:** This module presents a new area in human rights law – the relationship of human rights to conflict resolution. The module deals with the structuring of peace processes, and the human rights issues raised. It also seeks to introduce students to mediation skills.
- **Transitions from Conflict: Law and Politics:** This module examines the process of transition from conflict, and the role of law in that process. The module provides cutting-edge and practical analysis of self-determination law, transitional justice, and the roles of third parties (including UN peacekeeping).

Please note that not all modules listed here will be offered in every academic year. Applicants are advised to check, prior to application, if modules of particular interest are likely to be offered in that academic year. Any student who does not successfully complete the dissertation module within the time required may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Human Rights Law in place of an LLM.



Mode of Attendance

LLM in Human Rights Law

Full time - 3 semesters (1 year)

Part-time - 6 semesters (2+ years)

Registration: The programme will begin in September of each academic year.

Full-time and Part-time Students

The compulsory modules must be studied in Semester 1 of each year. Full-time students study the two compulsory modules in Semester 1 and four optional half-modules in Semester 2. Part-time students study one compulsory module in Semester 1 and two optional half-modules in Semester 2. The dissertation module is undertaken after successful completion of the other modules.

Teaching Arrangements

The programme is taught through a combination of weekly classes (3 hours each), and day-long block classes (9.15am to 5.15pm). Currently, in Semester 1, the Foundations of International Human Rights Law module is taught in twelve 3-hour classes (one per week), and the Foundations of Transitional Justice module is taught in five day-long block classes (approximately one per fortnight). In Semester 2 the optional half-modules are taught either in three day-long classes (fortnightly), or six 3-hour classes (weekly). At present, all classes are taught on Thursdays and Fridays, and all 3-hour weekly classes are scheduled for late afternoon to facilitate attendance by part-time students.

Students on the LLM programme are also strongly encouraged to attend and participate in other events run by the TJI, including the seminars in the TJI Seminar Series.

Note that enrolment on the LLM programme on a full-time basis requires a time commitment equivalent to an average full-time working week. Consequently, those in full-time employment are strongly advised to take the part-time route.

Internships for LLM students

LLM students may apply for three prestigious internships. These are with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Law Centre (NI), and Disability Action. The internships last for a period of 10 weeks with up to one student per semester being selected following a competitive application process. The internships run from October to December, or March to June. The TJI also works to encourage and facilitate other international internships.

Entry Requirements

Applicants must have at least a second class honours degree in law, or be able to demonstrate an equivalent standard through a primary third level degree in another discipline in combination with either a relevant post-graduate degree or diploma, or relevant and demonstrable

experience in human rights law or legal advocacy. If you do not have a law degree, you should include in your application a statement fully explaining how your experience or postgraduate degree or diploma is relevant to the LLM programme. In exceptional circumstances, applicants not in the above categories who can evidence substantial and significant experiential learning may also be considered for admission.

Applicants whose first language is not English should also have obtained:

- a minimum score in IELTS test of 6.0, or
- a minimum score in TOEFL test of 550 (or the equivalent in the computer-based test which is 240).

Applications

The online application system can be accessed via:

<http://prospectus.ulster.ac.uk/>

Applications should ordinarily be received before the last Friday in June, although consideration may be given to applications received after this date.

Scholarships, fees and further information

A small number of scholarships (in the form of a fee reduction) may be available to highly qualified or meritorious international students.

For further information on tuition and other fees, visit:

<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/fees/>

For further information on the Transitional Justice Institute or the LLM in Human Rights Law, please see:

<http://www.transitionaljustice.ulster.ac.uk/> or contact either:

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Dalriada House, Jordanstown

About the Transitional Justice Institute

The Transitional Justice Institute (TJI) has rapidly become internationally recognized as a leading centre in developing the field of transitional justice – broadly, the study of law in societies emerging from conflict. It has placed research emanating from Northern Ireland at the forefront of both local and global academic, legal and policy debates. Ground-breaking research on the ‘war on terror’ and the role of peace agreements, for example, received recognition in 2006 from the American Society of International Law: TJI scholars were awarded the top book and article prize for creative and outstanding contributions to international legal scholarship – an unprecedented achievement for a non-US research unit. The TJI was also recognized as one of the leading law research units in the UK, with Ulster ranking 13th out of 67 law units in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

The TJI is dedicated to examining how law and legal institutions assist (or not) the move from conflict to peace. A central assumption of the research agenda of the TJI is that the role of law in situations of transition is different from that in other times. In contrast to commonly held understandings of the law as underpinning order, stability and community, the role of law in transitional situations is a less understood role of assisting in the transition from a situation of conflict to one of ‘peace’ (perhaps better understood as non-violent conflict).

The aims of the Institute are:

- To build a theoretical and practical understanding of the role of ‘transitional justice’, and the underlying relationship between justice and peace;
- To examine the role of the international and domestic legal systems and institutions in facilitating transition from conflict;
- To make links between the experience of Northern Ireland and international experience, so as to benefit both Northern Ireland and other contexts;
- To inform policy makers involved in peacemaking in local and international institutions; and
- To make visible and critically examine gendered experiences of transition.

The TJI community of researchers is housed in restored 19th century buildings on two campuses – Dalriada House at Jordanstown and No. 8 College Avenue at Magee. It attracts international scholars and policy makers from all over the world. The TJI has played a key role in taking legal research in Northern Ireland to the centre of international stages. As such it constitutes an important resource for LL.M students and PhD researchers.

The Institute is led by a Directorate comprising:

Professor Christine Bell,
Professor Colm Campbell,
Dr Michael Hamilton and
Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin.

The Transitional Justice Institute is affiliated to the Association of Human Rights Institutes.

The information provided in this leaflet is correct at the time of going to press but the programmes are subject to continuing development and the University reserves the right to make changes at any time, before or after a candidate’s admission. As much notice as possible will be given of such changes. (27/01/09)