UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Faculty of Law

Postgraduate Handbook

LLM (Thesis)

2024

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Directors' Welcome

Welcome to the LLM Programme at Canterbury. We are sure that you will enjoy your time at UC Law, both in terms of your educational experience and through your interactions with fellow students.

This handbook provides a guide to LLM study at Canterbury. It provides a useful summary of key information about the LLM programme, and contact details of relevant people. In addition to this handbook, please ensure you become familiar with the regulations for your postgraduate degree, which can be found in the UC Calendar on the web. The UC Calendar is the definitive source for academic information and degree requirements.

Take every opportunity you can to learn from your supervisors. Also, take time to meet your fellow LLM students, and share ideas with them. They will be a source of great peer support to you, and you will likely find their research interesting as well.

Best of luck for your study this year!

About the LLM Programme

The LLM by Thesis programme requires submission of a research thesis of between 35,000 and 50,000 words.

Student must enrol on LAWS 690. Enrolment begins on the 1st of any month. Many students begin either at the start of February or July. A February start is preferable.

Administration of the LLM Programme

Directors of the LLM by Thesis:

Dr. Olivia J. Erdélyi
Level 4, Meremere
Room 411
Email: olivia.erdelyi@canterbury.ac.nz

Dr. Shea Esterling
Level 4, Meremere
Room 415
Email: shea.esterling@canterbury.ac.nz

Postgraduate Administrator
Ms. Natalie Welsh
Level 3, Meremere
Room 329
Email: natalie.welsh@canterbury.ac.nz

Student Advisor
Dr. Nicole Anfang
Level 3, Meremere
Email: nicole.anfang@canterbury.ac.nz

The LLM by Thesis Journey

Step 1: Deciding a Topic

The selection of appropriate topic(s) for research can be a difficult one. It is often said that the topic can make or break the degree. Students should think carefully about what they choose to research. For example, you might consider:

- What am I interested in? (Students tend to achieve higher results when they are interested in a topic, instead of selecting a topic purely because it looks good on a job application);
- Is there a legal argument to be made? (Master's research requires the formulation of a legal question, which is then answered in the paper);
- Is there something new to say about this topic? (Master's research ideally requires originality, not merely summarising work of others).

When deciding on a topic, students should feel free to approach relevant academic staff members. A list of staff research interests is available at the end of this handbook.

All contact details for Law School staff are found on the website at: https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/law/uc-law-school

Step 2: Contacting the Faculty of Law, Application & Documentation

If you are interested in applying for the LLM by Thesis, in the first instance contact the Postgraduate Administrator Ms. Natalie Welsh natalie.welsh@canterbury.ac.nz

When you decide to apply you will need to provide the following documentation:

- A 500-word research proposal identifying your area of research interest.
- CV.
- IELTS (if English as second language).
- University Transcript.
- Certificate/Documentation showing that you have completed your undergraduate degree.

The research proposal is crucial at this initial stage. This will allow the Directors of the LLM by Thesis to determine if appropriate supervision within the Faculty of Law is available for your topic. The Faculty of Law must have an appropriate supervisor available for your research who can take you on as you will be working with one or two supervisors during your degree.

Your application needs to be made through myUC.

Step 3: Enrolment

If your application is accepted, you will need to enrol.

All students should contact the University of Canterbury Contact Centre in order to enrol. International students will be sent details concerning the enrolment process. The Postgraduate Administrator, Ms. Natalie Welsh, can assist you with enquiries regarding the formal enrolment process.

Natalie is located in Meremere Room 329. You can email her at natalie.welsh@canterbury.ac.nz.

I'm Enrolled – What now?

Once enrolled, students submit their formal research proposal, including thesis title and detailed thesis plan within **two months (full-time)/4 months (part-time) of enrolment** for formal approval by the Director of Postgraduate Research.

Thesis proposal
It is a requirement to submit the formal research proposal to Turnitin via LEARN on the LLM by Thesis course page. The Turnitin site will produce a report which the student must provide to the supervisor. If there are any issues, these should be addressed prior to the proposal being formally submitted.

Students then begin work on the thesis.

Content
A thesis should be a well-argued analysis of an important legal issue. Originality is ideal, although you are not expected to engage in primary research in a wholly new field.

Nonetheless, you should take care not to embark upon a subject which has already been heavily worked on by other writers. Although finding material will be easier, it will be much more difficult to make the finished product look like your own work. Not only will the ideas come from other writers but, even if everything is properly attributed, the structure of the work will almost inevitably end up as a pale copy of some well-known publication. If all the issues are dealt with in the same way, with the same emphasis and in the same order, this will be unlikely to impress your examiners.

Research
Research should be as comprehensive as possible. Superficial research, using only secondary sources (i.e. casebooks and commentaries rather than the original works) can be spotted very easily. The importance of modern authorities should be stressed. Examples and illustrations given by major theorists can always be updated by referring to recent newspaper reports. In some areas of law, the citation of very recent authorities may be essential.

Length
The LLM thesis must not exceed 50,000 words, excluding footnotes and references, appendices and bibliographies. You should avoid placing substantive textual material in your footnotes. If you need to say it, place it in the text. You are required to state the word count on the title page of the dissertation. The word limit will be rigorously applied and dissertations over the prescribed limit may be rejected.

Submission of Work

Specific rules apply to the submission of the LLM by thesis. General guidance can be found here: https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/uc-graduate-school/about-graduate-school/policies-guidelines-and-forms-for-research

Form of Work

All written research submitted should normally follow the order listed below:

- Title page
- Acknowledgements (if any)
- Table of Contents (this should give page numbers of the various chapters)
- Table of Cases (if any)
- Table of Statutes (if any)
- Table of Treaties (if any)
- Main Body of the Text
- Summary and/or Conclusions
- Appendices
- Bibliography

Endnotes & Footnotes

Footnotes may be placed either at the foot of each page or after the conclusion as endnotes. Footnotes are an important part of the academic apparatus of the dissertation and therefore must be *consistent* and *precise*. Sloppy or imprecise footnoting will be penalised and may result in a dissertation having to be re-submitted.

Thesis submission

Please see the following link for information on submitting your thesis: https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/uc-graduate-school/about-graduate-school/policies-guidelines-and-forms-for-research

Progress Reports

Thesis students are required to submit progress reports at regular intervals, the first being due six months and the next being due at ten months. Prior to their first progress report, students must give an oral presentation on their research in front of members of the Faculty of Law.

Oral Presentations

An oral presentation is required as part of an LLM by Thesis degree. There are various opportunities to give this presentation including at one of our twice-yearly postgraduate symposiums. The Postgraduate Administrator will email in due course regarding the symposium details.

Students may also satisfy this requirement if they enrol in LAWS670 Legal Research Methods, which many LLM students take to develop their research skills. Part of the assessment on this pass/fail course is an oral presentation on your LLM research in front of members of the Faculty of Law.

Discuss with your supervisor fulfilling this presentation requirement and if enrolling in LAWS670 is something that would benefit you.

Regulations

All LLM students should be aware of the regulations for the LLM degree. These are published each year in the University of Canterbury Calendar. An electronic copy is available at https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about-uc/corporate-information/regulations/general-

regulations/enrolment-regulations The regulations contain important information regarding LLM candidature, including details on suspensions, extensions and time limits.

In the case of the LLM by thesis, students should be familiar with the University of Canterbury Regulations and Guidelines relating to thesis enrolment, available, together with other information likely to be useful to thesis postgraduate students, at https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/law/study-law-and-criminal-justice/law-qualifications/graduate-and-postgraduate-law-options/masters-and-doctoral-study-in-law#:~:text=full%2Dtime%20study.-,LLM%20by%20Thesis,a%20500%20word%20research%20proposal.

Note that enrolment covers 12 months; if you have not completed requirements as at your anniversary date, you will be required to re-enrol and pay fees for those courses that remain incomplete.

Understanding the Supervision Process

The supervision of the LLM involves a series of expectations for both supervisors and candidates. The most important consideration is that the dissertation should primarily be a candidate's own work. You should understand this process before enrolling.

Supervisors will expect candidates to:

- identify an appropriate topic for research;
- undertake a literature search and present a plan of work;
- consult on a regular basis throughout the process of research;
- raise any problems or difficulties they are experiencing in a timely fashion so that they can be addressed appropriately;
- provide a dissertation plan for comment;
- provide draft chapters for comment.

Supervisors will not:

- give an indication of the grade likely to be achieved;
- correct deficiencies of English or analytical technique.

Candidates can expect supervisors to:

- make themselves reasonably available for consultation during the dissertation preparation period, either in person or through some other convenient means such as e-mail or telephone;
- discuss and give advice on the appropriateness of the subject identified for research;
- comment on the adequacy of the literature search undertaken;
- comment on the appropriateness of the plan of work;
- offer critical comment on the dissertation plan;
- offer critical comment on a draft of the paper, dissertation or thesis or chapters of thesis.

You should meet regularly with your supervisor to discuss the progress of your research. Thesis students are encouraged to meet at least once per month with their supervisors.

What can I expect from my supervisor?

There are no fixed rules or requirements as to the degree of contact that students should maintain with their supervisors, however, regular contact is encouraged, usually 1 hour per month.

For Thesis students see the Code of Practice document at http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgraduate/masters-study/policies-regulations-and-guidelines/

At masters level, students are expected to decide on a topic of research for themselves. Supervisors can point students to places where ideas for topics might be found (for example relevant journals or websites) but will not simply provide a topic for research.

Once a topic is selected, supervisors can help the student 'design' or 'plan' the research project, and provide advice as to how to best structure the topic, and where appropriate research might be found.

Students may ask their supervisor to read one or two drafts of their paper prior to final submission. Supervisors will provide assistance by way of comment and feedback, but there are limits to this assistance. Supervisors cannot correct or rewrite drafts, nor can they say precisely how students can achieve a particular grade. While the role of the supervisor is to help the student, the work submitted must be that of the student.

What does my supervisor expect from me?

There is an expectation that masters students are self-motivated. This generally means that supervisors will not check in with masters students to ensure they are progressing on their research. Contact with supervisors is often student-led: you initiate meetings or submit drafts when you are ready to discuss your research, or when you have hit a problem with your research.

Masters papers should display a high level of written English, and comply with the New Zealand Law Style Guide. Supervisors will not re-write poor sentence structure or correct grammar issues (although these will likely be pointed out if they interrupt the flow of the argument), nor will they edit your footnotes. Supervisors may be able to suggest where the student might go to get help with these, but the supervisor's primary role is to advise and comment on the arguments and structure of your research.

All students are encouraged to go to the Academic Skills Centre for help in relating to writing, grammar and proof-reading.

The Research Student Supervision Policy is available here:
https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/content/dam/uoc-main-site/documents/pdfs/b-policies/Research-Student-Supervision-Policy.pdf

Who can I go to for help?

If you are unhappy with some aspect of supervision, you should talk to your supervisor. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, approach the LLM thesis Co-Directors

Student services are also available, please visit https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/support-and-wellbeing/uc-support-services

How do I change from Part-Time to Full-Time and vice-versa?

Any changes during the year must be approved by the Faculty of Law. To do this, submit a change of enrolment by logging in to myUC and following the instructions. You will be emailed a request by the Faculty of Law after the final date for course changes, asking you to confirm your enrolment details.

Please note that there is **no course fee refund** if a course is **withdrawn** after the last date for withdrawal, which can be found on the University of Canterbury website, https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/keydates/enrolment-course-dates/ .

Our Student Advisor can help you with these changes. Please contact Dr. Nicole Anfang nicole.anfang@canterbury.ac.nz

Change of Address

Please ensure that the University has complete and accurate contact details for you. Failure to do so may result in delays in notifying you of your course grades.

Illness

In the event of prolonged/frequent absences, in the first instance please email Postgraduate Administrator, Ms. Natalie Welsh natalie.welsh@canterbury.ac.nz

Suspension of Studies

If a suspension of overall candidature is sought, the application must be made by the student in writing, and supported by appropriate documentation, e.g., medical certificates.

Enquiries regarding suspensions are made to law-enquiries@canterbury.ac.nz .

Extension Requests

Extensions for the submission of assessed work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, such as illness, injury, bereavement or other unforeseen critical events.

Extensions will not be granted because of pressure of university work, e.g. several assignments being due at the same time, or because of the demands of extra-curricular activities, e.g. employment or sporting commitments. Students should plan their year's work to enable them to meet their academic deadlines.

Enquiries regarding extensions are made to law-enquiries@canterbury.ac.nz .

UC Code of Conduct

Please familiarize yourself with the University of Canterbury Code of Conduct for Students, available here https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/concerns/students/student-code-of-conduct/ Each student at UC has a set of responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be fully acquainted and compliant with the published regulations and policies of the University (eg, the Campus Drug and Alcohol Policy and Harassment Policy) and comply with New Zealand law.
- Provide information to the University that is accurate and not misleading.
- Behave in a manner that does not bring the University into disrepute.
- Respect the rights and property of others both on and off campus.
- Ensure their own health and safety and that of those around them.
- Seek to positively engage with the University and the wider community.
- Actively contribute to their learning by attending classes, meeting their obligations and course requirements.

What Facilities are available?

Canterbury Card

The Canterbury Card is the official University of Canterbury identification card. All enrolled students are issued with one. It is the source of access for a variety of facilities and services. Please visit Security on Ilam Road for more information.

It is used for:
- Door access
- Issuing library books
- Printing and photocopying charges
- Copy Centre
- ITS student internet access
- Student Association membership

General postgraduate rooms

All students can use any student computer rooms on campus, in any library, or in their own halls of residence. In addition, LLM thesis students will be allocated a desk in the Karl Popper building. Please be aware that this is a quiet study room. Access to this room is via Canterbury Card access, which will be arranged once enrolment has been completed.

Printing/Photocopying

There is a printer in the library, and other computer facilities elsewhere in the University have their local printers. Printing will be charged to your Canterbury Card.
Photocopying facilities are available in the library. Photocopying costs are a student's own responsibility.

IT Facilities/Consultants

If you have any computer software or hardware problems, please contact the IT Helpdesk on Extension 6060. Often any problems can be fixed immediately by remote assistance via the UC website.

E-Mail

After enrolment an email address and student log on is issued to all students. It is important to check your emails daily as the University will use email as the primary means of communication with students.

Internet Access

Internet access is available at students' own expense. Money can be transferred from your Canterbury Card to your computer account. Internet costs can be reduced by browsing after hours.

Check the IT web page for all information regarding web-based costs and adding money to your card at IT accounts | University of Canterbury Web browsing to New Zealand sites is free within the University.

Library Facilities

There are two Subject Librarians for Law (Theresa Buller and John Arnold) who are experts at using the library databases as well as finding obscure cases and journal articles.

The Law collection is located in the Central Library in Puaka – James Hight. You can find the book collection on levels 6 and 7 but much of the collection is accessible online. Access to the law databases can be found on the Law Subject Guide http://canterbury.libguides.com/laws

Students are encouraged to make an individual appointment with the Subject Librarians for Law to discuss their research and how best to use the Library. Email addresses are as follows:

- Theresa Buller: theresa.buller@canterbury.ac.nz
- John Arnold: john.arnold@canterbury.ac.nz

Referencing Style

The current style for any dissertation handed into the School of Law is contained in the *New Zealand Law Style Guide* This guide is available at: http://www.lawfoundation.org.nz/style-guide/index.html. Any deviation should be discussed with the supervisor/s.

Support - Writing and Study Skills

The University provides excellent assistance with writing and study skills through the Academic Skills Centre (http://www.lps.canterbury.ac.nz/lsc/), including specific programmes for postgraduate students.

How are papers graded?

Once a thesis is submitted for marking, it will be internally and externally marked. Content, style and clarity of presentation are all taken into account. Originality and insight are key requirements for a first-class grade. An LLM thesis must generally show critical analysis; mere description is not sufficient. The meaning of the different grades is given in the table on the next page.

The LLM may be awarded with First Class Honours or Second Class Honours (Division One or Two).

To be awarded First Class Honours, a student must achieve an A+, A or A.

For Second Class Honours, Division One, the student must achieve a B+.

For Second Class Honours, Division Two, the student must achieve a B average.

Graduation

Graduation ceremonies are held in April and August/September each year.

Please note that for students handing in their Thesis in February, it may not be possible to graduate in the April ceremony. This is because of the need to allow external markers sufficient time to mark the dissertation. Please check with the Postgraduate Administrator, Ms. Natalie Welsh natalie.welsh@canterbury.ac.nz

For further information, please see the graduation page on the UC website **http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/graduation/**

Meaning of Grades

	SHORT DESCRIPTION	FULLER DESCRIPTION	LEVEL
A+ (90-100%)	Outstanding/Exceptional	All the following expected: • All major points identified and answered correct • Where appropriate, alternative arguments canvassed • Originality • Evidence of significant reading and thought • Very high standard of prose and organisation	1st Class Honours
A (85-89%)	Excellent	Nearly all of the requirements for an A+	1st Class Honours
A- (80-84%)	Extremely good	Meets most of the requirements for an A+	1st Class Honours
B+ (75-79%)	Very good	• Most major points identified and answered correctly • Confident control over the subject matter • Very good understanding • Very good prose and organisation • No confusion or irrelevant material	Second Class Honours/Division 1
B (70-74%)	Good	Good understanding, but not as secure as for B+	Second Class Honours/Division 2
B- (65-69%)	Reasonably good	As for B, but even less secure	
C+ (60-64%)	Competent	• Essential points identified and answered • Basic understanding • A little confusion and irrelevancy tolerated	
C (55-59%)	Passable	• About half of the issues answered correctly • Basic understanding • Some confusion and irrelevancy tolerated	

C – (50 – 54%)	Just passable	• About half of the issues answered correctly • Very bare understanding • Some confusion and irrelevancies tolerated	
D (40-49%)	Poor	• Inadequate • Confused • Significant gaps in understanding and knowledge	
E (0-39%)	Unacceptable	Very poor knowledge and understanding	

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Cheating

Dishonest or Improper Practices

It is recognised that students will discuss course work and assignments with others, and such discussion is an important part of the learning process. However, any work presented by a student for credit in a course must be that student's own original work. If students are directed to complete work submitted for credit in groups, the work submitted must be the original work of the group. Work submitted in breach of these requirements, or which fails to comply with other instructions contravenes the University's Dishonest Practice and Breach of Instruction Regulations. Such work will either not be marked, and all credit for the work in question forfeited, or the matter will be referred to the University's proctor for investigation and possible referral to the University's Disciplinary Committee.

Instances of dishonest or improper practice in coursework and assignments include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism: Plagiarism means the dishonest presentation of work that has been produced by someone else as if it is one's own. Please note that the presentation of someone else's work as one's own, even without dishonest intent, may still constitute poor academic practice, and this may be reflected in the mark awarded. There are academic conventions governing appropriate ways to acknowledge the work or part of the work of another person and these are set out in the *New Zealand Law Style Guide* (McLay, Murray and Orpin, eds, Thomson Reuters, online).
- Submitting for credit which, although it is the student's own work, is substantially the same as work which has already been (or will be) submitted for credit in another course, whether in the School of Law or some other department or academic institution.
- Copying the work of another student. This includes copying the work submitted by another student for credit for a course in the School of Law or some other department or academic institution.
- Knowingly allowing another student to copy work which that other student then submits for credit for a course in the School of Law.
- Arranging for another person to complete work which is then submitted for credit for a course in the School of Law. An example falling in this category is work submitted for credit which has been obtained from a commercial assignment completion service. Care must be taken when using editing services as it is only assistance with grammar, punctuation and expression that is permissible.
- Completing work for another student which is then submitted by that other student for credit for a course in the School of Law.
- Including made up or fabricated material in work submitted for credit for a course in the School of Law.

If you are in doubt about any of the above with respect to a particular course, you should discuss the matter with the lecturer concerned.

See also the University Discipline Regulations, Dishonest Practice and Breach of Instructions Regulation, and Academic Integrity Policy – refer to UC Calendar and UC web.

Please also refer to the department policy on the use of integrated AI including AI chatbots.

Appeals
Students are referred to the University's Appeal Regulation – see University Calendar.

Staff research interests by subject

Administrative Law: John Hopkins, Philip Joseph

Art Law: Shea Esterling

Artificial Intelligence: Olivia J. Erdélyi

Biosecurity: Sascha Mueller

Child and Family Law: Ruth Ballantyne

Clinical Law: Robin Palmer

Commercial Law: Matthew Barber, Sascha Mueller

Company Law: Lynne Taylor

Comparative Law: Elizabeth Macpherson

Constitutional History: John Hopkins

Constitutional Law: John Hopkins, Philip Joseph, Natalie Biard, Rachael Evans, Sascha Mueller

Consumer Law: Matthew Barber, Debra Wilson

Contract: Matthew Barber

Comparative Law: John Hopkins

Competition Law: Andrew Simpson

Criminal Justice: Debra Wilson, James Mehigan, Marozane Spamers, Jayson Ware, Helen Farley, Chat Nguyen, Cassandra Mudgway

Criminal Law: Neil Boister, Debra Wilson, James Mehigan, Chat Nguyen, Marozane Spamers, Cassandra Mudgway

Cultural Heritage Law: Shea Esterling

Disaster Law: Sascha Mueller, Toni Collins, John Hopkins

Economic Law: Olivia J. Erdélyi, Andrew Simpson

Employment Law: Annick Masselot

Environmental Law: Elizabeth Macpherson, Toni Collins, Adrienne Paul, David Jefferson

European Union Law: Annick Masselot, John Hopkins

Evidence: Robin Palmer, James Mehigan, Cassandra Mudgway

Gender and the Law: Natalie Baird, Ursula Cheer, Cassandra Mudgway, Annick Masselot

Human Rights: Natalie Baird, Ursula Cheer, Shea Esterling, Elizabeth Macpherson, James Mehigan, Marozane Spamers

Indigenous Peoples' Law: Natalie Baird, Shea Esterling, Adrienne Paul, Rachael Evans, William Grant, David Jefferson

Insolvency Law: Lynne Taylor

Intellectual Property: Olivia Erdélyi, David Jefferson

International Criminal Law: Robin Palmer, James Mehigan, Chat Nguyen

International Economic Law: Chris Riffel

International Environment Law: Karen Scott

International Indigenous Law: William Grant, Rachael Evans, Shea Esterling, David Jefferson

International Institutions: John Hopkins, Karen Scott

International Investment Law: Chris Riffel

International Law: Natalie Baird, Neil Boister, Chris Riffel, Karen Scott, James Mehigan, Chat Nguyen

International Legal Theory: Karen Scott

International Trade Law: Chris Riffel

Land Law: Toni Collins, David Jefferson

Law and Medicine: Debra Wilson

Law of the Sea: Karen Scott

Māori Land Law: Adrienne Paul

Media Law: Ursula Cheer

Medical Law: Marozane Spamers

Mental Health Law: Marozane Spamers, Jayson Ware

Natural Resource Law: Toni Collins, Elizabeth Macpherson, Rachael Evans, David Jefferson

Pacific Legal Studies: Natalie Baird

Polar Law: Karen Scott

Policing and the Law: James Mehigan

Political Science: Olivia Erdélyi

Prisons and the Law: Helen Farley, James Mehigan, Jayson Ware, Marozane Spamers

Public Law: Natalie Baird, John Hopkins, Philip Joseph, Rachael Evans, Sascha Mueller

Refugee Law: Natalie Baird

Relationship Property and Family Finance: Ruth Ballantyne

Resource Management Law: Elizabeth Macpherson, Adrienne Paul

Sentencing: Debbie Wilson

Space Law: William Grant

Taxation: Andrew Maples, Adrian Sawyer, Rachael Evans, Alistair Hodson

Technology and Law: Ursula Cheer, Debra Wilson

Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Rachael Evans, William Grant, Adrienne Paul

Tikanga and Mātauranga Māori and the law: Rachael Evans, William Grant, Adrienne Paul

Torts: Ursula Cheer

Transnational Criminal Law: Neil Boister, Chat Nguyen

NOTE: Individual staff profiles are available at: www.canterbury.ac.nz/law/people