

# HKU PCLL Information Session

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# Aims

## Provide students with:

- a general professional education by equipping them with basic skills and knowledge to competently perform legal work in specified fields.
- a general foundation for subsequent practice by enabling them to develop new skills in response to employer and client needs.

# Why study the PCLL at HKU?

- First-class reputation - law school ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in the world in 2022\*
- 50 years experience teaching the PCLL
- Taught by full-time PCLL lecturers and experienced practitioners
- Only PCLL provider to offer the PT programme
- Most PCLL places available of any provider
- Excellent preparation for practice as a solicitor / barrister. Constantly updating courses to meet the demands of the profession.

\* According to the 2022 QS World University Rankings by subject (Law)

# Skills-based Course

**‘Skills-based’ PCLL started in September 2008**

- *Assume* basic legal knowledge
- Teach legal SKILLS
- Lots of opportunities to practice skills

# PCLL Curriculum

<b>First Semester</b> <u>Compulsory</u> <u>Core Practice Areas</u>	<b>Second Semester</b> <u>Compulsory Core &amp; Elective Practice Areas</u> <u>(Electives subject to minimum enrolment)</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Litigation *</li> <li>• Criminal Litigation **</li> <li>• Corporate &amp; Commercial Transactions</li> <li>• Property Transactions 1</li> </ul> <p>* includes Civil Procedure, Civil Litigation and Civil Advocacy</p> <p>** includes Criminal Procedure, Criminal Litigation and Criminal Advocacy</p>	<b>Compulsory core</b> - Professional Practice and Management	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Electives (Litigation)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Dispute Resolution</li> <li>• Matrimonial Practice &amp; Procedure</li> <li>• Personal Injury Litigation</li> <li>• Property Litigation</li> <li>• Employment Law &amp; Practice</li> <li>• Trial Advocacy</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Electives (Transactional)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting Commercial Agreements</li> <li>• Listed Companies</li> <li>• Property Transactions 2</li> <li>• Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning</li> <li>• China Practice</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Chinese in Legal Practice</li> </ul>	

# PCLL Curriculum (cont'd)

- Classes taught by way of Large Group Sessions (lectures) and Small Group Sessions (tutorials.)
- All students must take Compulsory Core Subjects
- List of electives reviewed/revised from time to time

# Part-time PCLL

# Part-time Curriculum

Part-time curriculum largely the same as full-time PCLL

- *Year 1:*  
*equivalent to semester 1 of full-time PCLL*
- *Year 2:*  
*equivalent to semester 2 of full-time PCLL*
- Uses same materials



# Part-time Teaching and Assessments

## Teaching

- Identical LGs by same teachers
- SGs mainly by practitioners

## Assessments

- Same standards as full-time PCLL

# Part-time Teaching Schedule

- Generally 3-4 evening classes (mostly at 7:00pm - 9:00pm) on weekdays
- Some classes on Saturday afternoons
- Court visits and some exams during day time on weekdays - may need to take leave from work

# Part-time Venue and Administration

## Venue

- Mostly at HKU campus

## Administration

- Separate team to manage PT PCLL Programme

# Fees and Admission

# Fees

## One-year FULL-time (government-funded)

- Local: HK\$42,100<sup>#</sup>
- Non-local: HK\$171,000<sup>#</sup>

## One-year FULL-time (self-funded)

- HK\$190,000<sup>\*</sup>

## Two-year PART-time (self-funded)

- HK\$220,000<sup>\*</sup> (HK\$110,000<sup>\*</sup> each year)

*<sup>#</sup> Subject to approval by the Council of the University*

*<sup>\*</sup> 2023-2024 Tuition Fees approved by the Council of the University*

# Application Process

Online Application ONLY:  
<http://www.aal.hku.hk/tpg>

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

- One application for each of Full-time and Part-time
- i.e. Two applications if want to be considered for both Full-time and Part-time
- **Strongly advised to make both FT and PT applications** unless you definitely do not want a place on one of the courses - cannot be considered for a place on a course if you did not apply!

# Application Process (cont'd)

## Contact details

- COMPLETE + CURRENT

## Preferences

- University
- Programme modes i.e. FT or PT

# Application Form - University Preference

Applying For	Action
Part-time only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State HKU as 1<sup>st</sup> preference on application</li></ul>
Full-time only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State HKU as 1<sup>st</sup> preference on application</li></ul>
Part-time & Full-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State HKU as 1<sup>st</sup> preference on <b><u>BOTH</u></b> applications</li></ul>

## Notes:

(1) Only choose ONE university as 1<sup>st</sup> preference or your application(s) will be disqualified from all universities

(2) Very rarely do we consider applicants who did not list us as 1<sup>st</sup> preference



# Application Form - Programme Mode Preference (HKU)

Applying For	Action
Part-time only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RANK “Part-time” as 1<sup>st</sup> preference on application</li></ul>
Full-time only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RANK “Full-time” as 1<sup>st</sup> preference on application.</li><li>• Note you <b>no longer</b> need to indicate your preference between a “Full-time UGC funded” place and “Full-time self-funded” place</li></ul>
Part-time & Full-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RANK “Full-time” and “Part-time” in order of preference</li><li>• State ranking on BOTH applications</li><li>• Make sure ranking on BOTH applications is CONSISTENT</li></ul>

# Preferences - points to note

- Must provide an acceptable justification for any change in preference.
- **University preference** - Cannot be changed once rejected by first preference university. If prior to rejection, need to notify both universities of your change.
- **Programme mode preference** - Can only be changed after the application deadline in exceptional circumstances. Will not be permitted to switch from a PT place to a FT place (e.g. because you obtained better grades than you expected.)

# Preferences - points to note (Cont.)

- There is no strategic advantage to be gained by putting PTSF as your 1<sup>st</sup> preference and FT as your 2<sup>nd</sup> preference - it will not make it easier for you to get a place on either programme!
- Your selection of which programme mode you prefer should be based on which programme you want to attend!

# Concurrent Registration

- ▶ Not permitted to be concurrently (i.e. double) registered on the PCLL and on another post-secondary programme without prior approval of HKU's Senate.
- ▶ Need to inform us on your application form if your existing studies will not be completed by August 2023 or if you intend to be concurrently registered.
- ▶ Need to apply for permission BEFORE you commence your PCLL studies.
- ▶ Warning: the PCLL is a demanding course. Permission to be concurrently registered is rarely given.
- ▶ **Failure to provide full disclosure of your concurrent or potential concurrent registration on another programme may lead to the disqualification of your PCLL application or your removal from the PCLL programme if such non-disclosure is discovered post admission.**

# Deadlines - 2 separate deadlines

- Online Application Deadline:

Friday, 28 April 2023 (at 12:00 noon Hong Kong time) -  
no need to submit your documents at this stage

**LATE APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED**

- Documents (including IELTS) Deadline:

Friday, 4 August 2023 (must have been received by  
close of business, i.e. 5:30 p.m. Hong Kong time)

**Must be sent by registered post - we do not  
accept documents delivered by hand**

# Admission Criteria - Elements

## Class of degree:

- At least 'high 2.2' degree [with CPE or equivalent if non-law degree; or the Advanced Diploma for Legal Executives (Graduate Level) @HKU SPACE]
- What does this mean? **At least something higher than the mid-point (a 2:2 degree ranges from 50-60 so the mid-point would be 55)**
- We have admitted students to the PT PCLL at marks slightly above the midpoint, in 4 out of the last 5 years
- Cut-offs vary from year to year
- **Must pass 9 "Core" pre-requisite subjects and 3 Hong Kong "Top-up" subjects:** if not, need to take Conversion Exams / GDL / CPE.

# Admission Criteria -Elements (cont.)

## Conversion Examinations:

- Twice a year in HK (can re-take as many times as wish. Pass / Fail only). See: [www.pcea.com.hk](http://www.pcea.com.hk)
- **Must provide official or certified true copies of PCEA Conversion Examinations Results and/or Letter of Exemptions** re 9 Cores/3 Top-up subjects. Obtain Letter of Exemptions early!
- HKU/CUHK/CityU students - no need to take Conversion Exams as satisfied all Core/Top-up subjects in LLB/JD
- For overseas degrees: must contact PCEA to see whether your degree meets the eligibility requirements for the PCLL and for a determination whether you need to take any conversion exams.

# Admission Criteria - Elements (cont'd)

## IELTS

- **Overall band grade 7 or above** (academic)
- Validity - TESTS DONE (date of Test Report Form) **within 3 years of APPLICATION deadline**, e.g. for Sep 2023 entry, Test Report Form showing TEST DATE on/after 28 April 2020
- Places may be limited => **plan ahead**
- **Only IELTS**, *not* TOEFL etc
- **Do NOT accept IELTS tests taken online**; you must attend one of the authorized IELTS test centres to take your IELTS test.
- **No exemptions from IELTS requirement**



# Admission Criteria - Policy

Vast majority of applicants considered based on academic results of qualifying law degree or equivalent

- Look first at all LAW subjects' average
- May consider other factors (to distinguish between applicants with very similar academic merits)
- Same admission standards for full-time and part-time PCLL
- Government funded places - *full-time* only + on academic merit

# What are the “other factors”?

- Only applicable in **borderline** cases where we are deciding between e.g. 2 applicants with very similar marks.
- Include:
  - Average of 6 “Core” subjects: Contract, Tort, Constitutional Law, Criminal, Land Law, Equity
  - Law school ranking
  - Admission in another jurisdiction
  - Other law degrees: LLMs etc
  - Legal working experience
  - Reference letters - note: quality over quantity!

# What do we not consider?

- Training contract / pupillage offers
- Membership of societies / extra curricular activities while at university
- Previous PCLL applications / rejections
- Applications to other PCLL providers (unless you have also listed them as first preference in which case you will be disqualified)

# Government Funded places vs. Self-Funded places

Question: Will I get a Government Funded (GF) place?

- Government funded places - *full-time* only + on academic merits. For entry in 2023, all GF places will be allocated based on all LAW subjects GPA.
- GF places are awarded to the students with the best marks
- Currently 117 GF places available out of 300 FT places.

# PT Programme: Admission via the Work-Experience Route (W.E.R)

- Alternative route for admission to PCLL PT programme only.
- Does not require a separate application: apply to the PT programme and highlight your legal working experience.
- 10 - 15 places available via W.E.R.
- Applicants interviewed by panel from PCLL Admissions Committee. Representatives from Bar Association and Law Society invited to attend.
- Interviews: mid - late August.
- Admission criteria:
  - ✓ At least 2 years genuine legal working experience (internships, pupillages do not count.)
  - ✓ Must have at least a 2:2 law degree
  - ✓ Demonstrate legal knowledge, ability, variety of experience, progression in role, can work unsupervised
  - ✓ May consider reference letters from employers
- Competitive to secure admission via W.E.R.

# Admission Process

## Applicants divided into 3 groups

- “Top” group - make offer ASAP
- “Bottom” group - issue rejection ASAP
- “Middle” group (i.e. not certain whether or not will get a place) - although we try to make a decision ASAP, may have to wait until mid to late-August for decision.
- We do not interview applicants unless being considered for W.E.R.

# Application Advice

## Meeting the Deadlines:

### (1) The Application Deadline

- Do not leave your application until the last minute - system closes at **12:00 noon HK time on relevant date.**
- **No extensions of time to apply are possible**
- **Applications cannot be re-opened once the deadline expires**
- You do not need to send us your documents by the application deadline - you only need to fill in the online application form!
- Do not wait until you have all your documents together to apply.

# Application Advice (cont.)

## Meeting the Deadlines:

### (2) The Documents' Deadline

- Send us your documents ASAP! In most cases, we need your documentation to make an offer.
- We cannot perform a document checking service for you. You are responsible for ensuring you send us the right documents.
- No offer or rejection by early August, means you are in the “middle” group.
- **Must send your documents by registered post** (documents by hand are not accepted at the Faculty front desk). Do not send by ordinary post!
- **Must send Original or certified true copies** - see the FAQ at [www.ple.hk.hk/pcll](http://www.ple.hk.hk/pcll)



# Practicalities...

... Please send your documents  
to us **ASAP!**

- CANNOT make decision without information / documents
- Do issue early conditional offers to those applicants who have sent us sufficient information
- No early offer or rejection → “middle” group

# What documents do you need to send us?

## Original or certified true copies of:

- All transcripts of any undergraduate / postgraduate degree including those from any exchange university;
- Graduation certificates\* of the above;
- Valid IELTS report;
- Results Notice\*\* and Results for Evaluation from Conversion Board (if applicable)

\* *certified true copies only*

\*\* *Please authorize PCEA to release the conversion examinations results to HKU. Certified copies of results notice and results for evaluation (incl. June 2023 exam) must be submitted by Documents Deadline for 2023-2024 PCLL Admissions.*

# What documents do you need to send us? (cont)

- Personal statement #
- Copy of HKID card / passport
- Other documents (if any)

*# only if you haven't completed the personal statement on the online application form.*

*Please ensure that your contact details are correct and current in case we need to contact you at short notice during the admissions period.*

# What if I am not successful in my PCLL application?

- Will not prejudice application in future years.
- Encourage you to re-apply - cut-offs vary from year to year.
- If re-applying - should analyse your rejected application - how can you improve for next time?
  - **Academic - boost marks? GDL / CPE?**
    - If not possible to boost marks - wait until at least 2 years legal working experience and try again.
  - **W.E.R.** - how can I demonstrate growth? Take on more responsibility? Diversify my role? Move into a different area of the law?
  - Did you fail to submit all the required documents? Onus on applicants to ensure their application is complete. HKU's Admissions Office cannot perform a document checking service due to the vast number of applications received.

# Dispelling the rumors...

(1) It is easier to get into the HKU PCLL if your LLB / JD is from HKU.

Truth: We do not reserve any places for HKU students. HKU students must compete for a place on the HKU PCLL along with all other applicants. It is not “easier” to get into the HKU PCLL just because your LLB / JD is from HKU!

(2) The HKU PCLL has higher cut-offs than the other providers.

Truth: this may have been true in the past. It is no longer the case. In fact the cut-offs at all three providers are now more or less the same. HKU has more PCLL places than the other providers and is the only provider with a PT programme.

# Dispelling the rumors....

(3) I've heard that HKU has a high first attempt failure rate.

**Truth:** the overwhelming majority of our students pass at first attempt. The number of students who fail at first attempt is certainly no higher than the failure rates on other professional programmes overseas. For those students who do fail at first attempt, they benefit from a review session to see where they went wrong and have the opportunity to resit the failed assessment in July / August. The profession demands that we adhere to certain minimum standards of competency.

# **PCLL Bursaries / Financial Assistance**

# Bursaries

## Department of Professional Legal Education (DOPLE) scheme

- *Full-time self-financing* students with:
  - Right of abode in Hong Kong; OR
  - Continuous residence in Hong Kong for 3 years immediately before start of PCLL
- No need to repay
- Means test
- Precise value to be determined by Department of Professional Legal Education (DOPLE) subject to a maximum and its financial position



# Other Financial Assistance

## JAC Hui Bon Hoa Bursaries

- Full-time self-financed students only
- Means test

## Other possible financial assistance

- Government loans
- University emergency assistance
- Commercial loans

**Thank you**

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect against the white background.