

**MSc in Oil and Gas (full-time)**  
**For students entering in 2017/8**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Programme length:	12 months
Date of specification:	15/Aug/2017
Programme Director:	Mr Adrian Aronsson-Storrier
Board of Studies:	Law (Postgraduate)

**Summary of programme aims**

The aims of the program are to

1. train a critical pool of professionals so as to develop their knowledge of the key issues in the emerging oil and gas industry;
2. increase the analytical and research skills of students in terms of their ability to collect and analyse information relating to legal, economic and environmental problems related to the oil and gas industry;
3. enable students to tackle complicated legal problems and provide solutions
4. expose students to a multidisciplinary learning environment;
5. help students develop an array of both analytical and critical skills, through independent study and working with others;
6. provide students with the knowledge and skills for professional life and further academic study.

**Transferable skills**

Students are encouraged to act independently in planning tasks and use feedback to reflect on their performance and assess the appropriateness of current levels of knowledge and skill. Students are expected to acquire an ability to think analytically, to develop frameworks for considering and resolving complex problems, and to discriminate between persuasive and unpersuasive arguments. Students will be able to research a variety of sources in libraries and on the internet, and, in particular, to research and assess academic literature. Particular elements of the programme expose students to the use of information technology and encourage the development of general professional capabilities, including recognition of deadlines and effective time management.

**Programme content**

The programme consists of 180 credits. Students on the MSc programme may choose either to take taught modules totalling 180 credits or can allocate 40 credits to a Project, in which case they must also follow the Project Skills module (10 credits).

The project must be written on a topic that has a meaningful relationship to issues of Oil and Gas law.

Content of the MSc Oil and Gas:

Students on the MSc Oil and Gas programme:

- either take Project Skills (LWMTPS, 10 credits), write a Project in Oil and Gas law (LWMTPR, 40 credits) and choose optional modules totalling 130 credits;
- or take optional taught modules totalling 180 credits.

This is subject to the requirement that students choose at least 20 credits from the list of optional modules of the School of Law.

Permission to take unlisted modules will only be granted in exceptional circumstances; for example, where a student has work experience in a field, then permission may be granted to take a module relevant to that field.

Note that, as with all modules, any pre-requisites or co-requisites will also need to be satisfied.

Students must normally be enrolled in a minimum of 50 credits in each of the Autumn and Spring terms. (For this purpose, when a module is taught across two terms, half of its credits will be allocated to the first term and half to the second.)

Students on the MSc programme are given the option to take taught optional modules in lieu of writing LWMTPR Project and taking LWMTPS Project Skills, because the programme was developed in response to a market demand for a relatively practically-oriented programme that would train a pool of professionals in the oil and gas industry. For this reason, requiring the completion of a dissertation-like component is not necessarily appropriate for all candidates on this programme. The MSc programme's flexible design means that those MSc students who find that writing a project fits well with their needs (in terms of career advancement and skills development) will choose to do so.

All module selections are subject to availability in any given year and to timetabling requirements.

**MSc in Oil and Gas Project-related Modules - MSc students who choose to write a Project must take all modules from this group**

Code	Title	Credits
LWMTPR	Project	40
LWMTPS	Project Skills	10

At least 20 credits must be taken from the Law School optional modules list

A range of optional modules are available from the School of Law, ICMA/Henley Business School, the School of Agriculture, the School of Economics and the School of Geography and Environmental Sciences.

The full optional modules lists are available from the Programme Director.

**Part-time or modular arrangements**

The MSc Oil and Gas programme can be taken part-time over two years. In the first year of study, a student will normally be required to complete 20 credits from each of the School of Law module list and the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development module list (above, subject to the availability of these modules in any given year) and further optional modules totalling not less than 20 credits and not more than 50 credits. In the second year of study a student will normally be required to complete any remaining modules. For MSc Oil and Gas students who choose to write a Project, this includes the Project-related modules LWMTPS Project Skills, and LWMTPR Project. The programme may not be completed over more than two years.

**Progression requirements**

A part-time candidate may only proceed into his or her second year if he or she has achieved 2 marks of at least 50% in his or her first year. A part-time candidate who chooses not to proceed to his or her second year may be considered for the award of Certificate if he or she gains an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 60 credits and has no mark below 40.

**Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

Teaching methods will vary from module to module but teaching will primarily be by means of seminars.

Certain modules may be partially taught by means of lectures and tutorials. All modules other than the Project will be assessed by one or a combination of: a timed, unseen examination; a timed, seen examination; assessed written work; and other forms of assessment (such as participation in class or an oral class presentation).

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

Further information on the classification conventions, including borderline criteria, are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/exams/PGclassification-post-2008.pdf>.

**For Masters Degree**

To qualify for Distinction, students must gain an overall average of 70 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 60 or more for the project. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Merit, students must gain an overall average of 60 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 50 or more for the project. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Passed, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 50 or more for the project. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

**For PG Diploma**

To qualify for Distinction, students must gain an overall average of 70 or more over 120 credits. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Merit, students must gain an overall average of 60 or more over 120 credits. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Passed, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 120 credits. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits and students must not have any mark below 40.

For PG Certificate

To qualify for a Postgraduate Certificate, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 60 credits and must not have any mark below 40.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a degree in law or a degree in economics or a degree in environmental science with a first or upper second class honours (or an equivalent classification if they graduated overseas). Applicants who do not reach these requirements may be considered if they have other qualifications or appropriate work experience. All applicants are considered on their individual merits, and the School may vary these requirements if it sees fit.

**Admissions Tutor:** Dr Stavroula Karapapa

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support teams and IT Services. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Support Centres. If a student has a general enquiry and is unsure where to seek help, they should visit their Support Centre. There are five Support Centres across the University, including one based at the London Road Campus. The Support Centre will be able to advise on matters such as extenuating circumstances, module selection, suspensions, withdrawals, timetable queries and transferring programme. The Support Centre will also be able to signpost students to Carrington building where other University services related to disability, financial support, counselling and wellbeing, accommodation and careers can be found. More information on what student services are available can be found here: <http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials>.

Within the School of Law, personal and academic tutors will provide help and guidance on academic, and where appropriate, other matters. A member of the academic staff of the School acts as Careers Advisor and the School has a Director of Taught Postgraduate Studies, individual programme directors for each taught postgraduate programme, a Senior Tutor for students on taught postgraduate programmes, a student support officer and a postgraduate administrative officer to provide support and advice to postgraduate students. In addition, all students receive a detailed Handbook to help them study law successfully.

A course on 'Academic Writing for LLM students' that we run in collaboration with ISLI will be made available to all students taking this programme. This will help them enhance their skills in essay writing and will also offer to an extent language support for international students. International students will also receive support through our International Support tutor.

A dedicated support for International Students is also available. GOALLS : Global Outlook Activities and Learning for Legal Seagulls was started in October 2015 as an experimental/pioneer effort for providing our international students with a regular, structured and customised support to help take them an extra step ahead in making the best use of their University days. Further details are available here:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/law/lis-goalls.pdf> & <http://www.reading.ac.uk/law/legalseagulls/law-is-support-new.aspx>

### **Career prospects**

While very many law graduates take professional exams in law and go on to practise law either in the UK or abroad, many others pursue alternative careers. This is particularly the case with those who have chosen to pursue a postgraduate qualification in law, as the skills gained by undertaking a postgraduate law degree are in great demand from both legal and non-legal employers. While not disqualifying students from any career open to non-specialist graduates, a postgraduate law degree will open many doors in more specialised areas of employment such as legal practice in fields related to the oil and gas industry, European, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, academia (with further postgraduate study), the media (journalism and broadcasting), the civil service, and other branches of public service.

## **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

The programme does not involve study abroad.

## **Programme Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Key issues in oil and gas industry and how they interrelate;
2. A range of research methodologies sufficient to formulate appropriate and relevant research questions and conduct independent research in law;
3. A select range of options to broaden understanding of the operation of law at an advanced level;
4. Appropriate contextual background to understand the substantive law.

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The basic knowledge in all modules is provided by seminars, although some modules may include lectures. All seminars allow a student to gauge his/her progress in that module and will require significant student input into the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. The critical input into learning is provided by a student's own reading and preparation for group discussions.

#### *Assessment*

Modules adopt a variety of assessment methods. All modules include either or both of summative assessed work and an unseen, timed exam.

### **Skills and other attributes**

#### **B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:**

1. Think logically;
2. Analyse and identify problems and issues;
3. Discriminate between relevant and irrelevant material;
4. Understand technical material;
5. Apply relevant knowledge effectively;
6. Construct defensible arguments and exercise critical judgment.

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Logic, analytical and critical skills and the ability to apply relevant knowledge are inherent in the study of law and these skills are encouraged and developed in seminars.

#### *Assessment*

Both formal examinations and summative assessed work assess all these skills either directly or indirectly.

#### **C. Practical skills - *able to*:**

1. Discover and use legal and/or political and contextual materials from a variety of sources;
2. Evaluate legal and/or political and contextual material both individually and as part of a team;
3. Construct and present (orally and in writing) defensible arguments and critical judgment.

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

All the practical skills are present in each module and are developed through seminars. The essence of legal study is to provide an answer to a practical legal problem having identified the legal issues, selected relevant facts and used appropriate law to provide a solution. The encouragement of these faculties is inherent in all parts of the degree. All modules seek to develop powers of critical analysis and judgment.

#### *Assessment*

The written element of 3 is directly assessed through summative assessed work and/or formal examinations. Examinations indirectly assess 1 and 2, while summative assessed work does so directly. The dissertation requires elements of 1, 2 and 3. Some modules assess oral communication (formatively or summatively).

**D. Transferable skills - *able to*:**

1. Work independently and hard;
2. Use different types of information sources;
3. Communicate technical material effectively both orally and in writing;
4. Construct defensible arguments and exercise critical judgement;
5. Reflect critically on one's own learning;
6. Consider career development.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Law is a subject of considerable complexity; some material is difficult and not all of it is of overpowering interest - a student must work hard to engage with such material. A student will be required regularly to participate in class discussions and make presentations. He or she will be required to engage with a considerable amount of academic and other literature and to assess and evaluate such literature critically and in the context of presenting advanced arguments both orally and in writing.

***Assessment***

Both formal examinations and summative assessed work assess all these skills other than 5 and 6. Seminars encourage a student to reflect on his or her own learning. Guidance is given throughout the degree programme on career development.

**Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**