

**Pre-Law in Wales  
Legal Practice Skills  
INST 4990  
Summer 2026  
3 credits**

Course Description:

This module considers skills associated with dispute resolution, and will consider dispute resolution, both in-court and out of court. Students will look at both civil and criminal matters. The vast majority of legal disputes are settled without litigation ("going to court"), which is costly, time-consuming, and can sour future relations between the parties. So lawyers need to be effective negotiators.

Learning Outcomes:

Legal Practice Skills: on completion of the course, a student should be able to:

- Apply the principles of enquiry-based learning and problem solving in a legal context.
- Undertake basic, accurate Practical Legal Research.
- Prepare an effective negotiation strategy, reflect on different negotiation styles, and undertake negotiations.
- Apply the principles of effective legal writing to produce a reflective piece for oral presentation, and draft a basic legal document.
- Make an effective oral presentation which reflects on their learning, identifying gaps in their knowledge and describing the limitations imposed by knowledge gaps.

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Module elements:

**1. Negotiation** (15 hours) – *"discussion aimed at reaching an agreement"*



Learning is based on the International Negotiation Competition - [Home | International Negotiation Competition for Law Students and Legal Practice \(law-competitions.com\)](http://www.law-competitions.com). Launched in 1998 by two American law schools, and modelled on the Negotiation Competition sponsored by the American Bar Association, this develops negotiation skills in the context of international transactions and disputes.

**2. Court Advocacy** (15 hours) - *“a specialist skill used by legal advisors to present an argument to a court with the aim of persuading a jury or judge”.*



*Cardiff students winning a moot competition*

Where matters cannot be resolved using alternative dispute resolution methods, civil matters can find their way to court. Also, in a criminal law context, lawyers represent clients charged with criminal offences ranging from minor to the most serious.

Using case studies replicating legal practice, students will learn to prepare and present a legal argument orally, such as making a plea in mitigation or a bail application. It takes place in an actual or mock courtroom.



*Cardiff students in a Mock Trial*

### **3. Legal research and drafting (15 hours)**

Students are introduced to legal databases and how/where lawyers find out the correct law – wherever you are based in the world as a lawyer the body of law is vast and constantly changes, so lawyers can't rely on remembering the law!

Students will learn reflective writing – *“critically analyzing an experience, its impact upon you, and how you plan to use your new knowledge”*. This could include reflecting on communicating appropriately with members of other cultures and developing/conveying self-awareness and appreciation of and cultural sensitivity to diverse populations; and the interrelationship between Politics and Law, and their international dimension, based on what students experience on the Cardiff program. It will also include elements of legal drafting such as witness statements.

#### Other educational, cultural and social experiences offered:

Typically, this may include events organized by Learn International and/or the law school, such as: Attending criminal and civil courts to observe courts and lawyers in action; Tour of the Senedd (Welsh Parliament) and meeting politicians and law-makers; Visit to major law firms; Cardiff Castle, and other castles; Historical coal mining sites; National Museum of Wales; National History Museum of Wales; Joining a typical “Welsh Male Voice Choir” at a practise session; Cricket practises/matches; other sporting venues eg The Principality Stadium, home to the Welsh Rugby Union.

#### Required Class Materials:

Readings will be provided during the program and will vary according to the modules selected, but all essential and recommended readings will be provided by the instructors with sufficient advance notice and will be emailed and/or posted on the course web site.

#### **General requirements and expectations for the course:**

You will be expected to comply with general professional requirements that relate to practicing lawyers. You will be placed in a real or simulated real client setting, and will be expected to observe client confidentiality and general ethical/professional

requirements of being a lawyer. Some elements of the modules include being in a working court setting and/or law clinic, with real clients, lawyers and judges in a legal working environment. For those elements you will be required to dress for court (office wear) and to behave appropriately with courtesy and respect. You will be expected to turn up promptly and attend all elements of the modules. If you are unable to attend for good reason such as illness then you will be expected to let your supervisor know in advance.

#### Required Participation Outside of Class Meetings:

You may be expected to take part in visits to courts and/or law firms and other organizations during the summer school. These may be in addition to scheduled class times, and will form part of your overall practical experience.

#### Final Examination:

Law Clinic Internship Skills – the assessment is submission of a legal letter to a lay client (1500 words), in the last week of the summer school.

#### **Reassessment:** In the event of a FAIL grade:

Law Clinic Internship Skills – reassessment will be facilitated by requiring you to submit an adjusted legal letter normally within two months of the end of the course. Feedback will be given on failed assessments, and examiners will liaise with you to set the deadline for submission

#### Grading Scale and Grading Policies:

For both modules, you will be graded as **Pass/Fail**. More specifically:

**FAIL** - This denotes performances that are:

**Not passable:** Performance in this range demonstrates hardly any knowledge of the issues raised and hardly any reflective learning. There are substantial omissions, irrelevancies and inaccuracies. A mark in this range may also be awarded to a competent answer to a question largely different from that which has been set.

**Poor.** Performance in this range may well be warranted where the candidate shows virtually no understanding of the issues raised or has only written a few lines.

**Very poor.** Performance in this range demonstrates no knowledge of the issues raised and no meaningful reflection.

**Unacceptable.** A mark in this range may be awarded to a candidate who writes and reflects on nothing, or who largely restates the question, while adding virtually nothing to it.

**PASS** - This denotes performances that are:

**Exceptional.** Performance in this range shows real flair and innovation.

**Excellent.** Performance in this range consistently demonstrates most if not all characteristics for an exceptional performance and excels in them, but will fall short of being an exceptional performance in at least one way.

**Very good.** Performance in this range typically goes beyond what has been taught and excels in at least one and probably several of the criteria. There is no expectation of originality of exposition or treatment. Areas of relative weakness will be minor.

**Good.** Performance in this range is good, but not higher than that. It shows sound knowledge and understanding of relevant principles and details, displays some analytical ability and contains no major errors or omissions.

**Satisfactory.** Performance in this range demonstrates a sound knowledge of the subject, but may not handle the information well in answering the question. It may contain errors and/or omissions

**Adequate.** Performance in this range is never more than sound in parts, with significant irrelevance, inaccuracy, omission and limited understanding. Passable, but barely so.

### Late Work

Late work will be accepted with a 50% deduction if submitted after the due date.

Example: If you turn in a 50-point assignment on Monday at 12:30 a.m. and the due date is Sunday at 11:59 p.m., you will receive 25 points maximum for the assignment for perfect work.

### Incomplete Grades

The grade of "I" may only be assigned if the student is unable to complete the course due to circumstances beyond the student's control that develop after the last day to withdraw from the course.

### Class Withdrawals

It is your responsibility to know important dates, such as the final day to withdraw from classes. You must officially withdraw from any class that you intend to drop.

### Academic Integrity

This course upholds a strict policy of academic integrity. All students are expected to complete their work independently and honestly.

This includes:

- Proper citation: All sources used in assignments must be cited appropriately according to the [preferred style guide (e.g., MLA, APA)] to avoid plagiarism.
- Independent work: All assignments must reflect your own understanding of the material. Collaboration on assignments may be allowed in some cases, but only with prior instructor approval and within specified guidelines.
- Honest exam practices: Exams and quizzes must be completed individually and without unauthorized resources.

If you have any questions regarding academic integrity or proper citation, please don't hesitate to ask me.

### The Use of AI for Writing in this Course

#### Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances or with Explicit Permission

During this class, we may use AI Writing tools. You will be informed as to when, where, and how these tools are permitted to be used, along with guidance for attribution. It is important to note that if AI tools are permitted to be used for an assignment, they should be used with caution and proper citation.

For example:

- You may use generative AI tools to brainstorm ideas for an essay or research paper.
- You may use generative AI tools to help you edit your writing.
- You may not use generative AI tools to generate the content of an essay or research paper.

### Required Participation Outside of Class Meetings:

You may be expected to take part in visits to farms, agribusinesses and other organizations during the summer school. These may be in addition to scheduled class times, and will form part of your overall practical experience.

### Attendance and Absence policies

This is a study abroad summer school program, so attendance is somewhat different than traditional courses. However, regular, consistent attendance is both expected and required.

#### Classroom Behavior Policy:

At all times, treat your presence in the classroom and your enrollment in this course as you would a job. Act professionally, arrive on time, pay attention, complete your work in a timely and professional manner, and treat all deadlines seriously. You will be respectful towards your classmates and instructors. Spirited debate and disagreement are to be expected in any classroom and all views will be heard fully, but at all times we will behave civilly and with respect towards one another. Personal attacks, offensive language, name-calling, and dismissive gestures are not warranted in a learning atmosphere. The instructors have the right to dismiss you from the classroom, study sessions, electronic forums, and other areas where disruptive behavior occurs.

Electronic devices such as mobile phones should be set to silent or turned off. Laptops are allowed for note-taking purposes; those who require laptops for accommodation of disabilities, work with Disability Support Services and your instructors to accommodate your needs. No unauthorized video or audio recording during class is allowed to protect the privacy of your fellow students; for those who require recording for accommodation of disabilities, work with Disability Support Services and your instructors to accommodate your needs.

If you are attending a court building or any other public building you are not permitted to carry any weapons, including pepper-spray or other defense sprays. If you are found to be carrying such items they will be confiscated and the local police may be involved to consider whether any offences under English/Welsh law may have been committed. If you are in any doubt, speak to your Cardiff instructors.

#### **Substantive changes to syllabus.**

This syllabus is a guide. Circumstances may alter the reading, teaching schedules, and/or test schedules.

#### **Daily or weekly schedule of topics, activities, and graded work:**

The exact daily/weekly schedule will be available closer to the start of the program.