University of the Built Environment
EST. 1919

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PG Cert Construction Law

Programme Specification 2027-2028

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Summary Programme Details

Final Award

Award: Postgraduate Certificate
Title of (final) Programme: Construction Law
Credit points: 60
Level of award: 7

Intermediate award(s) *

N/A

Validation

Validating institution: University of the Built Environment
Date of last validation: July 2026
Date of next periodic review: July 2031
Date of commencement of first delivery: September 2027
Duration: 1 year part-time
Maximum period of registration: In accordance with the Academic and Programme Regulations (opens new window).
UCAS Code/ HECoS Code: 100689
Programming Code: TBC
Other coding as required: TBC

QAA Guidance

UK Quality Code for Higher Education (opens a new window)

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Credit Framework for England (opens a new window)

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (opens a new window)

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statement: Law March 2023 (opens a new window)

OfS Standards

Office for Students (OfS) Sector Recognised Standards (opens a new window)

Programme Overview

Rationale

The Postgraduate Certificate Construction Law is for students wishing to undertake a selection of modules from the LLM Construction Law programme. This programme is primarily aimed at those in industry seeking to gain additional specialist knowledge or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in new areas.

The programme has been designed to provide students with a grounding of relevant theory appropriate to the practice of construction law and commercial management of construction projects. Subjects such as law of contract and law of tort are covered, with a focus on ensuring that theory is taught in a manner that is relevant to the provision of services in commercial roles within the construction industry.

Entry Requirements

Entrants to this programme (on any intended specialism route) normally are required to have attained one of the following:

- a Bachelor's Degree with honours in a Construction related subject and/or a Law degree at lower second standard (2:2), or equivalent;

Or

- a Bachelor's Degree with honours, or equivalent, in any discipline, plus 5 years' experience in a relevant field*;

Or

- a Level 5 qualification as defined by Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) plus 5 years' relevant experience*;

Or

- a professional qualification plus 5 years' relevant experience*.

If an applicant does not meet the standard entry requirements, the University of the Built Environment will consider the application on an individual basis. In such cases, the application will be assessed by the Programme Leader, or for students in Hong Kong by the Dean (Academic Portfolio & International), who will give careful consideration to any professional and life experiences, as well as any academic or vocational qualifications the applicant may hold. The applicant may be required to provide a detailed personal statement and/or a reference or letter of support from an employer or mentor to support the application, and will be

invited to attend an online interview to further explore their suitability for postgraduate study, including their motivation, relevant experience, and capacity to undertake study at Level 7.

Applications are assessed in accordance with the University of the Built Environment Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (opens new window).

*A relevant field or experience may include, but is not limited to, construction management, quantity surveying, project management, civil engineering, architecture, building surveying, facilities management, contract administration, procurement, or roles involving dispute resolution, contract law, or regulatory compliance within the built environment. Relevant professional body membership may include organisations such as the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Ciarb), or other recognised industry and professional bodies.

English language requirements

All University of the Built Environment programmes are taught and assessed in English. The applicant will therefore be required to demonstrate adequate proficiency in the language before being admitted to a course:

- GCSE Grade 4 (or c) or above in English Language or English Literature, or an equivalent qualification. For further information on equivalent qualifications please contact: admissions@ube.ac.uk
- Grade 6.0 or above, with at least 6.0 in the reading and writing modules, in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) academic test administered by the British Council.
- 88 or above in the Internet option, 230 or above in the computer-based option or 570 or above in the paper-based option, of the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test.
- Grade 4 (or C) or above in English (Language or Literature) at A/S Level.
- HKDSE (Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education) Grade 3, or HKALE (Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination – Advanced Level & Advanced Supplementary Level) Grade E, or HKCEE (Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination) Grade 3-5 or Grade A-D (Syllabus B only).

Applicants with a bachelor's degree that has been taught and examined in the English medium can be considered for entry in the absence of the qualifications detailed above if applying for a non-apprenticeship programme.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) routes into the programme

University of the Built Environment policy and procedures for Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are set out in the University of the Built Environment Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (opens new window). This policy statement takes precedence in any such decision.

University of the Built Environment also recognises credit awarded by higher education degree awarding bodies in accordance with the relevant higher education qualifications framework and allows that credit to count towards module exemption from the programme.

Normally at least one-third of any award must be accumulated as a result of learning assessed by the University, subject to any overriding Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements.

Note: As this a new programme, recognition of prior learning for the award of credit and credit transfer will not be available for the first intakes of the programme.

Programme Progression

For details of progression arrangements, please view the Academic and Programme Regulations (opens new window).

Successful completion of the PG Cert will enable the student to apply to for the PG Dip or LLM Construction Law, or to conduct further research.

Award Regulations

For details of award arrangements, please view the Academic and Programme Regulations (opens new window).

Career Prospects

This programme supports students in furthering their professionalism within industry and will enhance their career path opportunities. It enables students to decide whether to progress to a full Masters programme and then, subject to further studies or career development, into roles including:

- **Specialist Solicitor/Barrister:** working in private practice law firms within construction, engineering, or real estate departments (Note: the PG Cert Construction Law is not a qualifying law degree).
- **Dispute Resolution Specialist/Consultant:** specialised roles in arbitration, adjudication, and mediation, including expert witness positions.

- **Claims Consultant:** managing disputes, claims, and project risks during construction projects.
- **Project Manager/Commercial Manager:** construction professionals with the PG Cert Construction Law can take on more responsibility in contract administration.

Programme Aims

Programme aims

The programme prepares students with a foundation for further professional development and extension of their knowledge, in preparation for further academic study, including completion of a Master's award.

- Deepen legal and technical knowledge - to provide comprehensive understanding of construction law principles, including contract drafting, tortious liability, insurance, procurement (public and private), and environmental regulations.
- Specialised contract analysis - to enable students to interpret, critically evaluate, and administer standard forms of construction contracts (e.g. Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT), New Engineering Contract (NEC), International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC)) and understand key legal terms like time, cost, quality, and variations.
- Enhance risk management capabilities - to teach students how to identify, analyse, and allocate risks associated with complex construction projects, including design liability and insolvency.
- Develop research and analytical skills - to cultivate the ability to conduct high-level legal research, enabling students to formulate, communicate, and apply well-reasoned legal arguments to real-world scenarios. This includes how to utilise Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a tool to support legal research, contract review/administration and practice in the construction industry.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary expertise - to allow lawyers to understand construction processes (project management, architecture, surveying) and to enable construction professionals to gain necessary legal acumen.
- Career advancement and professional accreditation - to enhance employability within specialised construction law firms, contractors, or consultancy roles, with some programmes offering pathways toward membership in professional bodies, such as the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Ciarb)

Market and internationalisation

The programme is typically aimed at two main groups:

- **Legal professionals:** Solicitors, barristers, and corporate lawyers seeking to specialise in construction disputes, contract drafting, or procurement.
- **Construction industry professionals:** Non-lawyers, including architects, civil engineers, quantity surveyors, project managers, and building surveyors, who need to understand the legal implications of their project

Students will typically come from a background of architecture, law, surveying, an engineering discipline, construction project management or associated business. Typical progression would be from quantity surveying to construction law given that the skills of these two programmes are heavily aligned. Another route would be lawyers seeking to understand the construction process in a more detailed manner.

Programme Structure

Module List

Code	Module	Level	Credits	Core/ Elective
LAW7CON	Obligations and Commercial Relationships	7	20	Core
LAW7LPC	Commercial Construction Practice	7	20	Core
LAW7TOR	Negligence and Damages	7	20	Core

Notes

Credits are part of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS). Two UK credits are equivalent to one European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit.

Students entering with exemptions may see a change to their study route.

Learning Outcomes

Having successfully completed the programme, the student will have met the following learning outcomes.

Level 7

A – Knowledge and understanding

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
A7.1 Construction contract law Critically evaluate the structure, operation and application of standard form contracts (e.g., JCT, NEC, FIDIC).	LAW7CON LAW7LPC
A7.2 Rights and duties Critically evaluate the legal duties and obligations of employers, contractors, and professionals.	LAW7CON LAW7LPC

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
A7.3 Liability and tortious liability Critically assess complex issues involving tortious, multi-party liability, and negligence in design or construction.	LAW7CON LAW7LPC
A7.4 Specialised areas of construction law Critically evaluate legal regimes impacting on construction projects including construction procurement methods, health and safety regulations, environmental law, and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI).	LAW7CON LAW7LPC

B – Intellectual skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
B7.1 Contextual synthesis (non-lawyers) Critically synthesise foundational legal knowledge of contracts and torts, demonstrating the ability to apply legal reasoning to complex industry scenarios	LAW7TOR LAW7CON
B7.2 Contextual synthesis (lawyers) Critically integrate legal knowledge with developing an understanding the technical, management, and procurement aspects of the industry.	LAW7LPC
B7.3 Commercial awareness Critically evaluate legal issues while considering the technical, financial, and time-related risks of construction projects.	LAW7LPC

C – Subject practical skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
C7.1 Construction process and project lifecycle Critically analyse the life cycle of a construction project, from commissioning and procurement to completion.	LAW7CON LAW7LPC
C7.2 Contextual understanding Apply and critically evaluate foundational legal knowledge of contracts and torts.	LAW7TOR LAW7CON

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
C7.3 Contextual understanding Critically apply legal knowledge to technical, management, and procurement aspects of the construction industry.	LAW7TOR LAW7CON

D – Key / Transferable skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
D7.1 Legal analysis Demonstrate the capability to conduct high-level legal analysis and apply it critically to real-world, complex scenarios.	ALL
D7.2 Research and evaluation Independently analyse, critique, and synthesise existing legal literature, policy, and case law within the construction industry.	ALL

Delivery structure for part-time study route

Autumn (UK) Entry

Year 1, Semester 1

Module Code	Module Name	Level
LAW7CON	Obligations and Commercial Relationships	7
LAW7LPC	Commercial Construction Practice	7

Year 1, Semester 2

Module Code	Module Name	Level
LAW7TOR	Negligence and Damages	7

Spring (UK) Entry

Year 1, Semester 1

Module Code	Module Name	Level
LAW7TOR	Negligence and Damages	7

Year 1, Semester 2

Module Code	Module Name	Level
LAW7CON	Obligations and Commercial Relationships	7
LAW7LPC	Commercial Construction Practice	7

Module Summaries

Core Modules

LAW7CON Obligations and Commercial Relationships

This module examines the law of contract by examining the principles of forming contractual relationships, the terms on which these relationships are formed and common problems faced by parties when establishing the contractual terms they are seeking to rely upon.

LAW7LPC Commercial Construction Practice

This module provides an analysis of the legal framework, contractual mechanisms, and professional practices governing the construction industry. It also bridges the gap between legal theory and practical application, focusing on procurement, administration of construction projects, the commercial processes commonly utilised on construction projects, and an overview of the processes to resolve disputes within building and engineering projects. It is designed to equip students with the knowledge to identify, analyse, and manage legal risks from project inception to completion.

LAW7TOR Negligence and Damages

This module provides an initial examination of the principles of the Law of Tort as it applies specifically to the construction industry, engineering projects, and property development. It focuses on the legal obligations that arise independently of contract law (civil wrongs), which hold construction professionals and contractors liable for damage, injuries, or economic loss. The module addresses how construction activities can lead to tortious liability, covering essential principles such as the duty of care, breach, causation, and damages, alongside specific defences available in tort claims.

University of the Built Environment Competence Standards

All undergraduate and postgraduate students are expected to meet the basic academic competencies laid out in the admissions criteria for their degree programme. Additionally, University of the Built Environment students are expected to meet the following competency standards:

1. **Competence Standard**: The ability to work independently and/or as part of a team, for the purposes of research, collective problem solving and communication of results/findings.

Justification: Professionals in the built environment are required to work with a variety of stake holders to achieve joint and individual targets. University of the Built Environment graduates should be capable in both settings

2. **Competence Standard:** The ability to exercise self-learning and use acquired theoretical and practical knowledge.

Justification: Students in higher education are required to engage in self-directed learning to achieve learning outcomes. Support is available from University of the Built Environment to acquire these skills.

3. **Competence Standard:** The ability to effectively present key facts, ideas, problem solutions, results etc. using verbal, expressive, and/or written communication.

Justification: Professionals within the built environment sector are required to present information to colleagues, clients, and other stakeholders in a variety of formats. University of the Built Environment graduates should be able to display these skills.

4. **Competence Standard:** The ability to submit work within agreed time frames.

Justification: Working to deadlines is a key requirement of professionals in the built environment. University of the Built Environment courses have a maximum period of registration that must align with accrediting PSRBs.

5. **Competence Standard**: The ability to use digital resources as an aid to research, analysis, problem solving and presentation.

Justification: University of the Built Environment's delivery method is entirely online with no physical campus. Support is available to assist with use of digital resources.

6. **Competence Standard:** The ability of learners to express and develop ideas using digital literacy in English.

Justification: University of the Built Environment is an online institution based in the UK. Students must have the ability to communicate in English through University of the Built Environment's online platforms.

7. **Competence:** The ability to critically interpret qualitative and/or quantitative data

Justification: Built environment professionals are required to handle both qualitative and quantitative data. University of the Built Environment's assessments also require critical interpretation, support is available to develop these skills.

8. **Competence:** Knowledge of the general principles and practices of professional codes of conduct.

Justification: Students seeking professional accreditation are also advised to consult the relevant PSRB which identifies key competencies for various levels of professional competence.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and Teaching

Knowledge and understanding

The teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programme is guided by the University-wide Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The approach adopted is student-centred learning design, that supports the educational needs of our diverse student community. Learning has been designed with flexibility in mind to support students to adopt their own learning experience best suited to their needs.

Students are taught through online learning resources available to them, including customised text material, study papers, learning activities and interactive media. These are complemented by a variety of Lecturer-facilitated sessions and interactions, using a range of media for enhancement of the learning experience.

Students are encouraged to research beyond the material provided and undertake self-directed learning throughout their programme.

Module delivery follows a standard format, incorporating a range of subject appropriate resources suitable for the online learner. This may include, but is not limited to, audio-visual presentations, interactive case studies and online journals.

Intellectual skills

Learning and teaching methods are applied to enable the development of cognitive skills. These skills are aligned to those used by construction professionals, lawyers and those working on construction disputes either as advisors or resolvers, but also meet the needs of working in other industries. These skills are developed through interaction with multi-media learning resources, self-directed learning and via participation in student-centred learning activities. The approach to assessment is lecturer-guided and formative feedback on these skills is given appropriate emphasis.

Students are encouraged to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding through a range of online activities and exercises. These require students to apply research and analysis to industry issues.

Subject practical skills

1. Contractual and risk management skills

- **Drafting and negotiating:** skills to negotiate and draft construction contracts, sub-contracts, and professional appointments.
- **Analysis of standard forms:** detailed practical knowledge of standard form contracts (e.g. FIDIC, NEC, JCT), including understanding the risks, rights, and duties of all parties involved.
- **Risk allocation:** ability to identify and manage risks associated with time, cost, latent defects, and multi-party liabilities in projects.
- **Procurement strategy:** familiarity with public and private procurement laws and methods.

2. Legal analysis and practical application

- **Case law and statutory analysis:** ability to analyse recent developments in case law and legislation to provide advice in a commercial context.
- **Construction practice interpretation:** applying law to project management, including health and safety, environmental, and insolvency issues.
- **Commercial awareness:** understanding the commercial context of construction projects, including financing and project management structures.

3. Transferable professional skills

- **Specialised research:** ability to conduct high-level research into legal issues impacting the construction industry.

- **Written and oral communication:** drafting clear, concise legal documents and presenting arguments in a professional manner.
- **Interdisciplinary teamwork:** working effectively with surveyors, engineers, architects, and legal practitioners.
- **Critical thinking:** evaluating complex legal and commercial scenarios to offer practical resolutions.

Key/Transferable skills

The BE Ready Orientation sets out the importance of transferable skills. These skills are developed through the programme, utilising study, and assessment. This can be via virtual learning environment (VLE) discussion, tuition discussion, problem-solving exercises, which are conducted individually or in groups, and coursework, which provides the ideal combination to internalise these aspects though different learning methods. The Study Skills area of the VLE is a further resource for support in developing these skills.

The learning activities in this programme require students to undertake research, evaluate their findings and develop solutions. The teaching of module topics requires students' engagement with a range of online activities that develop research and evaluation skills and cultivate a systematic approach to problem solving. Engagement with the University of the Built Environment learning community develops communication and collaboration skills. Additional support for transferrable skills is delivered via the joint programme webinars delivered to the student throughout the year. Students also have the opportunity to develop transferrable skills through formative and summative opportunities within the modules.

Assessment

The assessment strategy for the programme is guided by the University of the Built Environment-wide Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The aim of University of the Built Environment's assessments is to allow students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned using a range of formats and which encourage critical self-reflection linked to personal development. To support this, assessments are clearly related to module learning outcomes and the activities within the module support students in achieving these.

University of the Built Environment's practice is to require assessments to be vocationally and professionally relevant. Assessments are built that have direct application to industry standards, and that enable students to learn through real world scenarios and working practice. This involves the generation of tasks based on problems, scenarios or case studies from recent real-world situations that reflect and/or replicate the vocational requirements of the industry and the

international nature of the subject matter. All elements of assessments are discipline-specific for each programme as well as supporting the acquisition and promotion of transferable skills, including research skills development.

Formative assessment and feedback opportunities are provided throughout the programme in a variety of formats to motivate, guide and develop students through their learning. Students are required to complete various pieces of coursework in the modules which are assessed within set time frames. Detailed feedback is provided on lecturer-assessed work, which explains how the mark was derived, what was done well and what could be improved for future assessments. Objective testing is also utilised in formative (including self-assessment) and summative assessment. Individual projects in the final stage are assessed in accordance with their own guidelines and marking schemes.

All assessment contributing to award is subject to moderation policies. Moderation at University of the Built Environment is designed to reflect the quality of the student submission and the benchmark standards for the various levels of undergraduate study. Moderation of marking accords with QAA recommended best practice to ensure that marking criteria have been fairly, accurately, and consistently applied during first marking.

Assessment Diet

The types of assessments used on this programme will include coursework (such as essays, reports, portfolios, reflections, problem or short questions or video presentations), computer-based assessments, and computer marked assessments (CMAs). The exact combinations of assessment will vary from module to module.

In general, there will be 2 assessments per module. The first assessment is usually either coursework or a CMA. The second assessment is usually coursework. Some modules may have up to a maximum of 4 assessments.

Study Support

BE Ready Orientation

The purpose of BE Ready is to prepare students for online learning with the University but also to support students throughout their learning journey. Students are expected to visit BE Ready every semester for updates, welcome back week activities as well as advice specific to their level of study.

There are a variety of resources which will help students to get started. These include how to use the VLE, how to navigate a module, the University e-library and how to join a webinar. BE Ready also provides practical advice such as how to

manage independent study, where to find our Study Skills resources and how to access academic or pastoral support. All this information is key to having a successful start to supported online learning with the University of the Built Environment.

Resources are available to support students with referencing and how to develop good academic practice to avoid academic misconduct.

Student learning support

The programme is taught via the University of the Built Environment's VLE and academic facilitation and support is provided online giving student's access to the University Lecturers and other students worldwide.

The Education team will guide and support students' learning. Furthermore, all students who do not engage with initial assessment or the VLE will receive additional support from the Programme Team. Other the University administrative teams provide support for assessments and technical issues including ICT. University of the Built Environment's VLE provides the main point of contact for students for these teams throughout the duration of their programme.

Each student, wherever their location, will have access to a wealth of library and online materials to support their studies. International students are able to use their local context when writing their assessments.

The Academic Support and Enhancement (ASET) team works with departments to promote student retention, achievement and success. This work is achieved through a multi-faceted approach, which consists of:

- delivering support tutorials to students identified as academically at risk to develop the academic skills needed for success;
- developing 'self-serve' support resources to enable students to develop their academic skills;
- delivering teaching webinars and drop-in sessions on academic skills;
- working with the Education team and other support teams to identify ways in which student success can be further facilitated.

Relevant research is also carried out to inform proactive interventions, and to develop policy and practice.

Disability, neurodiversity, and wellbeing related support is provided via a dedicated Disability and Welfare team at University of the Built Environment.

English language support

For those students whose first language is not English, or those students who wish to develop their English language skills, additional support is provided through online resources on the VLE in the resource 'Developing Academic Writing'.

The resource includes topics such as sentence structure, writing essays and guidance for writing at Master's level aimed at developing students' study skills.

Personal and professional development

Students are undertaking vocational programmes that are intrinsically linked to the accrediting professional bodies. Students are encouraged and supported to understand the need for the recognition of these bodies and guided as to how to meet the professional membership requirements.

More generally, the University has a dedicated Careers Advisor to ensure students have appropriate access to careers education, information, advice and guidance.

Programme specific support

Each programme has a Programme Leader, as well as Module Leaders, Module Lecturers and Academic Support Tutors to support the students throughout their time with the Programme.

The University of the Built Environment staff are accessible during normal UK working hours, during which they also monitor the 24/7 forums asynchronously and provide encouragement, assistance and necessary tutor and student feedback services.

Access to the University of the Built Environment e-Library is on a 24/7 basis and the University has a full-time librarian during normal UK working hours.