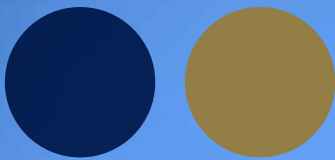




UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
YUNIBESITHI YASEKAPA - UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Elevate your legal career with a **POSTGRADUATE DEGREE**

from the University
of Cape Town's
Faculty of Law



FACULTY OF LAW
SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED
LEGAL STUDIES

All the information you
need to prepare for your
postgraduate studies in Law





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BUILDING CAPABILITIES FOR A JUST AND EQUAL SOCIETY



The School for Advanced Legal Studies at UCT is known for cutting-edge research, in-depth teaching, and vibrant debates across many legal disciplines. We are home to a wide range of law specialisations, with academics who are renowned experts in their field.

This booklet provides all the information required to support you in making appropriate and informed choices about your postgraduate specialisation, the kind of qualification you are looking for, and the programme structure best suited to your needs and your career goals.

Register for a postgraduate programme and become a member of UCT Law's energetic community of students, academics, researchers, and professionals.

For additional information please contact the Postgraduate Unit in our Faculty Office on lawreg-pg@uct.ac.za or on 021 650 3086.

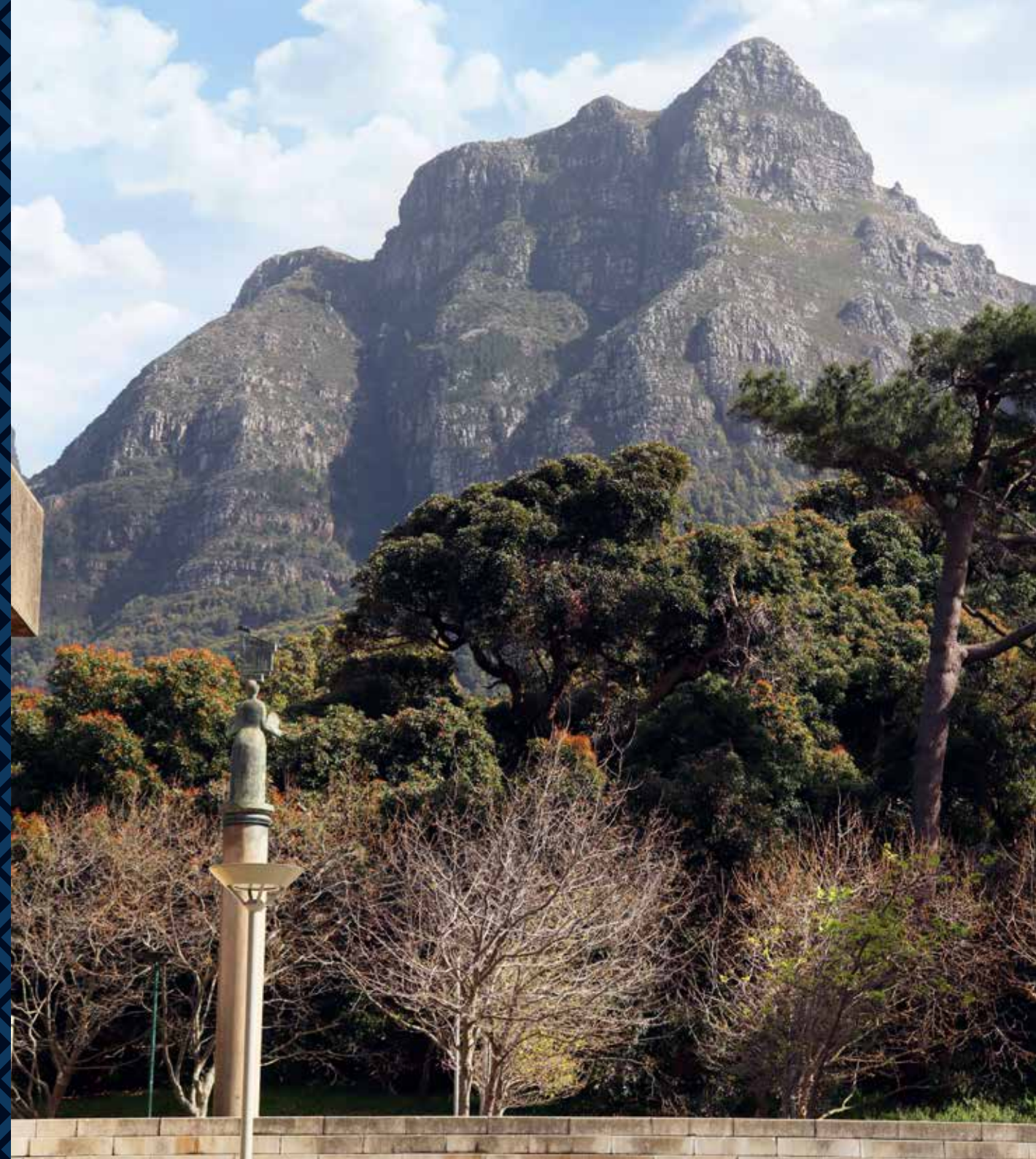
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SHOULD I CONSIDER A POSTGRADUATE LAW QUALIFICATION?

Most lawyers choose to focus on specialised areas of the law such as, for example, environmental law, criminal law, or tax law. A postgraduate law qualification will deepen your knowledge of your chosen area of the law and will support your efforts to pursue a career that motivates you on both a professional and personal level.

Although not the only contributing factor, a postgraduate qualification can be a positive addition to your CV that leads to improved opportunities for your career growth, and a better salary – particularly if you have skills, knowledge, expertise and a qualification that sets you apart from others.

If you're looking for the best way to jumpstart a change of direction in your legal career, a postgraduate qualification in Law is a great foundation for this change.



IS IT WORTH PURSUING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN LAW?



Undertaking a Master's degree (or postgraduate diploma) is indeed worth it if you are clear about your plans after graduating with your LLB. If you want to practice law with a Bachelor of Laws, you need to complete your articles and pass the required exams for admission to the High Court of South Africa. If you have not yet completed articles nor worked as a legal professional, however, specialising straight after your LLB gives you a head start in defining your professional trajectory. If you already have work experience, a postgraduate qualification ensures that you become an expert in a particular field to support your practical knowledge.

Should you want to follow an academic path and go into teaching law, a Master's in Law is a basic requirement. In addition, if you're interested in working internationally, a postgraduate Law qualification is the best option to improve your chances of following an international career path.

DO I STUDY FOR A POSTGRAD LAW QUALIFICATION **ON MY OWN OR WITH OTHER STUDENTS?**

More than 40% of UCT Law students are registered for postgraduate programmes, so we have a richly diverse grouping of students at Postgraduate Diploma, Master's and PhD levels. If you register for a coursework-based programme, you will share your courses and seminars with intellectually curious and thoughtful candidates from across the continent and the globe. Expect to meet students who are professional lawyers, government officials, magistrates, diplomats, human rights and environmental activists, business entrepreneurs, doctoral students, tax practitioners, mineral law associates, intellectual property professionals and recent LLB graduates. While research degrees can by nature feel like a lone journey, UCT Law offers a vibrant academic and social community in which to embed your research endeavour.

FACT

Apart from teaching and research, UCT Law academics are involved in

- Legislative drafting and advice
- Setting legal precedents through participating in or contributing to landmark legal cases
- Pushing boundaries with regard to legal interpretation and application
- Standing for justice



WHO ARE UCT LAW'S STAFF?

UCT Law hosts a diverse and highly qualified complement of teachers, researchers and practitioners who are engaged in research and related projects that support our commitment to building a just and equitable society in South Africa.

Our established academics are internationally renowned in their areas of expertise, and our cohort of younger academics are building on this long-standing tradition of excellence. All of our academic and research colleagues publish regularly in accredited journals, contribute chapters in books, produce key research reports for policy development, and author notable books.

Our academic administrators and support staff are engaged and keen to assist you and support you through your academic journey at our School for Advanced Legal Studies.



WHO ARE UCT LAW'S STUDENTS?

Our postgraduate student community is very diverse and we welcome appropriately qualified students from across the globe.

The combination of varied perspectives and lived experiences, along with classroom engagement, makes for a learning environment that develops critical thinking skills, encourages creative ideas, and hones analytical and research capacity.

When you join the *School for Advanced Legal Studies*, you become part of a global network of alumni and professionals who are shaping how we think about and practice law across the world.

IS THERE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

The Faculty runs a donor-funded scholarship programme that operates on a highly competitive annual call-for-applications basis. There are only a limited number of such scholarships available for postgraduate Law studies. Many of these are named scholarships which focus on particular areas of research, but we also hold general scholarships for Law studies.

In addition to the UCT Law donor-funded scholarships, UCT has a dedicated Postgraduate Funding unit which holds information and offers guidance and advice on postgraduate funding options and opportunities. Be sure to investigate every possible funding avenue well before you register, and ensure you're aware of the respective deadlines. This includes those wanting to apply for National Research Foundation funding, which must be done through [UCT's Postgraduate Funding Office](#) in accordance with strict deadlines.

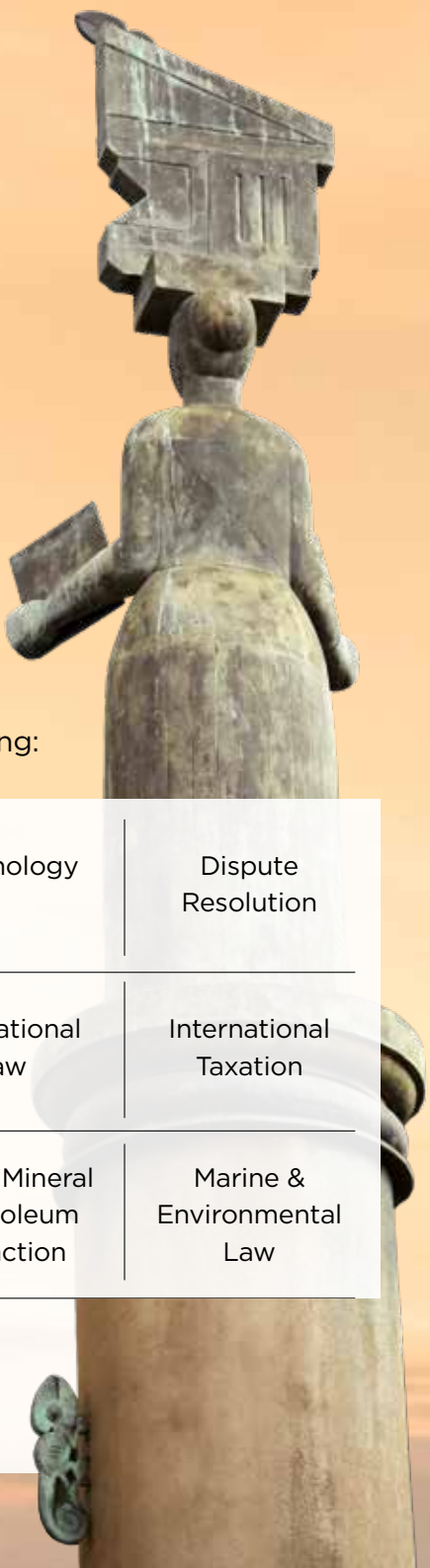
See the [Law Faculty Handbook section on scholarships, bursaries and prizes](#) and review the [Faculty website's scholarships pages](#)

OUR POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The UCT Faculty of Law offers a range of qualifications, programmes and specialisation options through our three departments, namely [Private Law](#), [Public Law](#) and [Commercial Law](#).

Most of our postgraduate programmes are offered through Public Law and Commercial Law, in an array of areas, including:

Commercial Law	Comparative Business Law	Constitutional & Administrative Law	Criminology	Dispute Resolution
Environmental Law	Human Rights Law	Intellectual Property Law	International Law	International Taxation
International Trade law	Judicial Studies	Labour Law	Law of Mineral & Petroleum Extraction	Marine & Environmental Law
Public Law	Shipping Law	Tax Law		



FACT

UCT Law is home to one of the country's leading Refugee Rights Law Clinics. South Africa is currently home to approximately 250 000 refugees and asylum-seekers.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT PROGRAMME TYPES FOR A POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATION?

There are several avenues for postgraduate qualification, where each qualification and degree type is structured differently.

Postgraduate Diploma

A postgraduate diploma takes one year to complete and can be taken in any of the following specialisations:

- Dispute Resolution
- General
- Judicial Studies

Minimum requirements

- NQF7 qualification
- 65% GPA (although the Faculty might consider a 60 - 65% GPA)

Programme structure

- Four courses completed in one year. This programme can be done over two years.

🖥️ www.sals.uct.ac.za

Master’s in Law/ Master’s in Philosophy

A Master’s degree takes one year to complete, and may be taken in three different ways:

- by coursework and research tasks only (the Professional Master’s)
- by coursework and a minor dissertation (many of our specialisations are offered as an LLM or an MPhil, depending on whether you have an LLB or not)
- by dissertation only (this is for students doing research only)

For those wanting to pursue one of the routes requiring a dissertation, your research should focus on a topic that is of interest to you, which needs to be approved by your academic supervisor.

Minimum requirements

- NQF8 qualification
- 65% GPA (although the Faculty might consider a 60 – 65% GPA)

Programme structure

Master’s with coursework only (Professional Master’s)

- Four courses completed in one year, with a related research task (5,000 words) for each course. This programme can be done over two years.

Master’s with coursework and dissertation (LLM/ MPhil)

- Four courses completed in one year along with a minor dissertation (25,000 words). This programme can be done over two years.

Master’s by research (LLM/ MPhil)

- Dissertation only (40,000 words)



Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

This research degree is undertaken by thesis and students must be registered for a minimum of two years.

Minimum requirements

- NQF9 qualification
- 70% for Master’s level

Programme structure

- PhD students set their research programme with their supervisor through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding.

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DO I NEED AN LLB FOR ADMISSION TO A POSTGRADUATE LAW PROGRAMME?

The Faculty offers many degree options for which applicants do not require an LLB degree. It is possible, in a range of the specialist programmes, to pursue a Master's degree without an LLB, either as a Professional Master's (four courses with four associated research tasks) or as an MPhil (four courses and minor dissertation).

WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED FOR THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

PGDip, and coursework-based Master's (LLM, MPhil and Professional Master's)

- Certified copies of full academic transcripts, including a grading legend from your institution explaining the local marking system
- Full CV
- 500-word motivation for proposed study
- Names and contact details of two referees (at least one of which is academic)
- Proof of English proficiency (if necessary)

Master's (LLM & MPhil) by research, and PhD

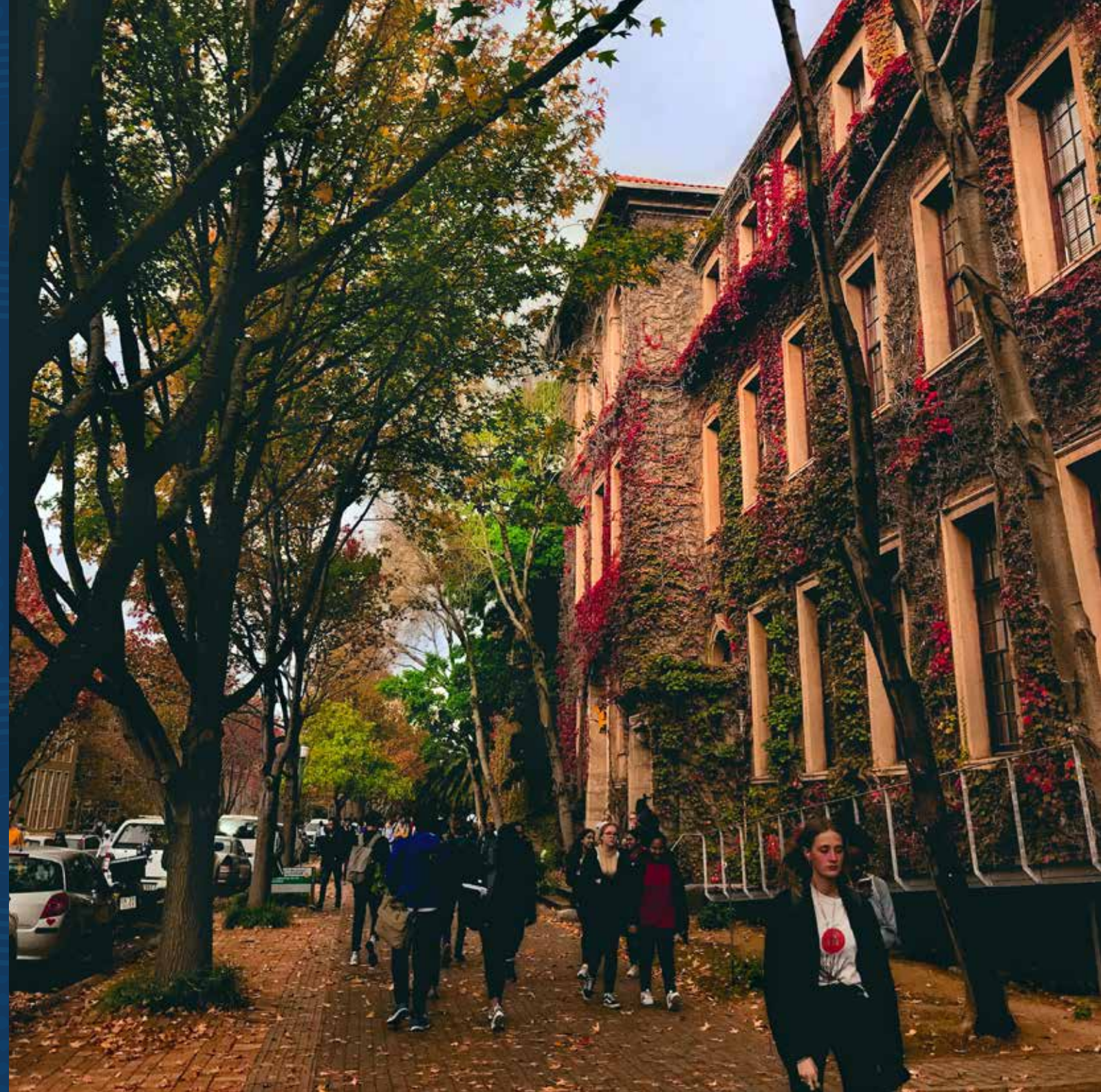
The following documents are required for online applications for research degree programmes:

- A brief CV
- Official transcript (unless the applicant is a UCT graduate)
- Contact details of two academic referees
- A 3-4 page (1,500 words) research statement

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Which specialisation?

The Faculty offers a range of specialisations at Master's level, so the first thing to do is to work out what your interests are and what area of Law you want to specialise in. Once you have identified this area, you can look to see what programme types are offered in your preferred specialisation (eg. Professional Master's or LLM or MPhil).



COMMERCIAL LAW

Transforming business landscapes through legal insights and know-how

In today's globalised economy, understanding the intricacies of commercial transactions, regulations, and corporate governance is essential for navigating the potentially rocky terrain of commerce and business. Commercial Law, it could be said, is the backbone of the business world and governs the conduct of businesses and individuals in commerce, trade, and sales. A broad field of legal practice, it encompasses a wide range of topics, including contract law, corporate law, intellectual property, international trade, and competition law. This field is critical for ensuring the fair and legal operation of businesses in ways that protect both companies and consumers. By mastering Commercial Law, you would have the potential to become a crucial player in fostering economic growth and stability.

At UCT Law, our postgraduate programmes in Commercial Law are designed to ensure that you're equipped with the expertise and skills to succeed in this field. Our Master's in Commercial Law is tailored to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the legal principles governing commercial activities.



Career opportunities

A Master's in Commercial Law opens doors to a wide range of career opportunities, and our graduates are able to pursue more focused roles such as (amongst many others): Corporate Lawyer (advising businesses on legal matters, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, and representing companies in legal disputes); In-House Counsel (working within a corporation to provide legal guidance on commercial transactions, mergers and acquisitions, and corporate governance); Regulatory Affairs Manager/ Company Secretary (guiding companies in navigating the complex landscape of regulatory compliance, and helping businesses adhere to industry-specific regulations and requirements); Intellectual Property Lawyer (protecting and managing intellectual property rights, including patents, trademarks, and copyrights); International Trade Lawyer (advising on cross-border trade issues, helping companies navigate international trade regulations and resolve trade disputes); and Legal Consultant (providing expert legal advice to businesses and government agencies on commercial law matters).

**Please note that some of the roles mentioned above would be open only to those with an LLB who are admitted attorneys.*

Programme structure

The curriculum comprises four elective courses. For the Professional Master’s the courses must be selected from the list below. For the LLM and MPhil programmes, three electives must be from this section, or from courses listed under the Labour Law or Shipping Law programmes; and the fourth elective can be selected from offerings in Private Law or Public Law. In addition, for the LLM and MPhil programmes, a compulsory minor dissertation must be written of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor.

- Admiralty Jurisdiction and Practice
 - Advanced Company Law
 - Advanced Contract Law
 - Banking & Finance Law and Regulation (on offer from 2025)
 - Carriage of Goods by Sea
 - Chinese Law and Investments in Africa
 - Collective Labour Law
 - Commercial Arbitration
 - Company Law, Corporate Governance and Stakeholder Relations
 - Comparative Law and Business in Africa
- Competition Law
 - Corporate Law and Governance (not offered in 2024)
 - Electronic Transactions Law
 - General Tax Law Provisions
 - Individual Employment Law
 - International Commercial Transactions Law
 - International Law of the Sea
 - Islamic Law and Finance
 - Law of Banking, Finance and Payments
 - Law of International Trade
 - Law, Regional Integration and Development in Africa
- Legal Aspects of Corporate Financing Structures
 - Marine Insurance Law
 - Maritime Law
 - Resource Revenue Law
 - Tax Policy in a Developmental Context
 - Workplace Discrimination and Equality Law

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Courework & Dissertation
- Master’s: Minor Dissertation



FACT
UCT academics and researchers have developed and are supporting a range of digitisation projects of laws, amendments, case law, judgements and more, ensuring that this information is free to access and easily available.

NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM (Professional Masters):	LLM/MPhil:
	180 credits	240 credits
	4 courses @ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.	4 courses @ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

COMPARATIVE BUSINESS LAW IN AFRICA

A comparative business law approach to unlocking African prosperity

In a globalising world, characterised by a variety of integration processes and regional blocs, knowledge of the law across national borders and trade barriers is imperative for lawyers operating in a continental and international context. The *Centre for Comparative Law in Africa* draws on the strengths of comparative methodology to build knowledge of and insights into law and business in Africa, to offer its Master’s programme in Comparative Business Law in Africa.

This Master’s qualification provides insights into contract negotiation, arbitration and other commercial transactions in the multiple legal environments on the continent; and ensures a thorough understanding of the relationship between domestic law and the range of regional legal instruments and policies. While focused on the core topics of comparative business law in the African context, students have the flexibility to choose electives and structure their programme in a way that speaks directly to their specific interests.



Career opportunities

The programme is aimed at law professionals seeking to develop their knowledge and skills about legal and business frameworks across the African continent, and for those already working in a continental and international context.

Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, two elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor. See the course selections below:

- Comparative Law and Business in Africa
- Law, Regional Integration and Development in Africa

And any two elective courses from the

Department of Commercial Law.

Particularly recommended are:

- Chinese Law and Investments in Africa
- Resource Revenue Law

Research component

- Minor Dissertation

NUMBER OF CREDITS

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each,
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.



CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

Where Law meets democracy

At UCT Law we recognise the profound impact that constitutional and administrative law have on shaping societies and safeguarding democratic principles. Our Master’s programme in Constitutional and Administrative Law is designed to equip legal professionals with the advanced knowledge and skills essential for navigating the increasingly complex legal landscapes in which we live.

This programme is ideal for lawyers seeking to specialise in constitutional law, public officials involved in policy-making, and legal advisors in governmental and non-governmental organisations. It offers a deep dive into the principles of constitutionalism, the separation of powers, judicial review, and administrative law doctrines. Students will engage with case studies and current legal debates, gaining practical insights into applying legal theory to real-world scenarios.

Career opportunities

The growth opportunities for graduates of this programme are diverse – you could pursue a role as constitutional lawyer, advising government on legal reforms and compliance issues; or you could work in international organisations advocating for human rights and governance reforms. Specialists in constitutional and administrative law are highly sought-after in academia, contributing to legal scholarship and shaping future legal professionals.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, two elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor. See the course selections below:

- Governing under the Constitution: Law and Practice
- Administrative Justice and Open Government

And any two of the following elective options:

- Human Rights, Legal Pluralism, Religion and Culture
- International Environmental Law
- International Rights of the Child
- Law and Society in Africa
- Litigating South African Bill of Rights
- Principles of Environmental Law
- Refugee Law and Human Rights
- Transparency Law & Governance: Global and Local Theory & Practice

Research component

- Minor Dissertation

NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM/MPhil:
	240 credits
	4 courses @ 30 credits each, and a dissertation @ 120 credits.



CRIMINOLOGY, LAW AND SOCIETY

Investigating the Complexities of Crime in its Socio-legal Context

With the prevention and management of crime and its impacts consuming ever more resources in society, globally, the study of crime and understanding the complexity of the legal and social contexts – in which crime occurs and is understood – is becoming increasingly more important.

The **Centre of Criminology** and **Centre for Law & Society** jointly provide the academic home for the Faculty's Master's in *Criminology, Law and Society*. This postgraduate programme seeks to develop interdisciplinary skills in theory and research methods and offers a range of speciality courses, including theories of crime and social order; policing; sexual offences; law and society in Africa; and forensics and the law.

A key focus of this programme is to equip graduates with the methodological skills necessary to understand and deal with “law in action”.





Photograph by Mike Peel

FACT

It is through the South African court system that our laws are administered and applied. Prisons are a part of this system, where criminal law-breakers are often sentenced to serve a jail term. The Cape of Good Hope Castle is the oldest known prison in South Africa, followed by The Old Granary on Buitenkant Street, just up the road from the Castle. Cape Town’s prison then moved to what is now the National Archives building on Roeland Street, before being moved to Pollsmoor Prison in Tokai.

Career opportunities

This Master’s programme, undertaken through coursework & minor dissertation, is for those already working or seeking to develop a career in areas related to criminal behaviour and justice systems – such as (amongst many others) Law Enforcement, Crime Analysis, Policy Analysis, Victim Advocate, Legal Consultant, Community Outreach, Security Management, Risk Assessment and Forensic Psychology.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, two elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor. Course options are below:

Compulsory (core) course

- Law in Action

Compulsory (core) courses [one of the following to the value of 30 credits]

- Theories of Crime and Social Order
- Law and Society in Africa

Elective courses [two of the following to the value of 60 credits]

- Sexual Offences and the Law
- Punishment and Human Rights
- Victims and Victimology
- Police and Policing: Explorations in Security Governance
- Forensics and the Law
- Criminal Process and Human Rights

Research component

- Minor Dissertation

NUMBER OF CREDITS

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses
@ 30 credits each,
and a dissertation
@ 120 credits.



FACT

At least 450 new national laws have been promulgated since 1994.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Bridging divides through commercial arbitration, negotiation and mediation

In a world where conflict seems to be an inevitable part of the socio-economic landscape, the knowledge and skill required for effective resolution of disputes can have far-reaching implications. Our postgraduate programmes in dispute resolution, focused on core courses including *Negotiation*, *Mediation*, and *Commercial Arbitration*, offer an in-depth understanding of conflict dynamics and strategies for constructive resolution.

Career opportunities

The Dispute Resolution postgraduate programmes are primarily aimed at legal professionals looking to develop negotiation techniques in settlement discussions, to act as mediators in disputes, and to build skills in commercial arbitration. Others who may be interested in this area of knowledge and skill are business executives seeking to safeguard company interests and steer their organisations away from costly legal battles; those involved in international relations and diplomacy; and labour relations and human resources practitioners, amongst others.

Programme structure

Postgraduate Diploma: The curriculum comprises three compulsory courses and one elective course (total 120 credits). Please consult the handbook for the specific courses available at PG Dip level.

Professional Masters: The curriculum comprises three compulsory courses, one elective course and four independent research tasks demonstrating professional expertise (total 180 credits).

LLM/MPhil: The curriculum comprises three compulsory courses, one elective course and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor (total 240 credits).

Master's course options

Compulsory (core) courses:

- Mediation
- Commercial Arbitration
- Negotiation

Elective course (select one):

- Any Master's course
- Recommended course: International Law on Disputes and Use of Force

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master's: Minor Dissertation



NUMBER OF CREDITS	PGDip:	Professional Master's:	LLM/MPhil:
	120 credits	180 credits	240 credits
	4 courses	4 courses	4 courses
	@ 30 credits each.	@ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.	@ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Championing justice, defending dignity, advocating equality & promoting rights

In an ever-evolving global landscape, the pursuit of justice and the protection of fundamental human rights stand as paramount objectives. This postgraduate programme is for those seeking to understand the role and potential of the law in understanding, promoting, upholding, and advancing human dignity, equality and access to justice. The specialised legal focus will equip aspiring legal professionals, activists, policymakers, and academics with the essential tools to navigate and interrogate the intricate legal frameworks that safeguard human rights, and that serve as the foundation for a just and equitable society.



Career opportunities

Graduates of our programme have the potential to become catalysts for positive transformation, eradicating systemic injustices and advancing equality. Our graduates actively engage in legal battles to hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable and provide legal support to marginalised communities. Furthermore, our *Human Rights Law* graduates contribute to policy formulation and the promulgation of laws that seek to protect vulnerable communities. Ultimately, this qualification bolsters efforts to promote social justice, preserve human dignity, and create a more equitable society.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises four elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor. Courses can be selected from the lists below:

Elective courses – at least three courses from the following:

- International Rights of the Child
- International Protection of Human Rights
- International Protection of Women’s Human Rights
- Refugee Law and Human Rights
- Human Rights, Legal Pluralism, Religion and Culture
- Litigating the South African Bill of Rights
- Punishment and Human Rights

One of the following:

- International Law in Theory and Practice
- International Law on Disputes and Use of Force
- Governing under the Constitution: Law and Practice
- Sexual Offences and the Law
- Administrative Justice and Open Government
- Transparency Law & Governance: Global and Local Theory & Practice
- Police and Policing: Explorations in Security Governance
- Victims and Victimology
- Criminal Process and Human Rights

Research component

- Minor Dissertation

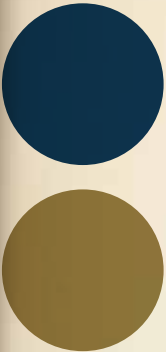


NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM/MPhil:
	240 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each, and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Mastering IP law for a world of innovation

In today’s constantly evolving technological and creative landscape, Intellectual Property (IP) Law stands as a key area of expertise at the intersection of innovation, legal frameworks, and legal protection. Our Intellectual Property Law Master’s programme equips future legal professionals with specialised knowledge in Electronic Intellectual Property Law, Advanced Intellectual Property Law, and Intellectual Property Law, Development, and Innovation. IP Law is becoming increasingly foundational in safeguarding creative and technological advancements, and in ensuring fair compensation and recognition for creators and innovators. As most industries expand globally, the demand for skilled IP lawyers continues to rise.



Career Opportunities

Graduates of our programme are well-prepared for a range of career opportunities in this specialisation, including as an Intellectual Property attorney, advising clients on patent, trademark, and copyright law, to ensure that their innovations and creations are legally protected; as corporate counsel, working within a company to manage IP portfolios, negotiate licensing agreements, and protect intellectual assets; as a technology transfer specialist who facilitates the transfer of technology and IP rights between research institutions, companies, and markets; or, amongst many other options, as a government policy advisor, shaping IP laws and regulatory frameworks to promote innovation and protect public interest. Delve into the intricate world of Intellectual Property Law, where cutting-edge education meets real-world application, preparing you for a fulfilling career involved in the leading edge of innovation protection.

Programme Structure

The curriculum comprises one compulsory core course, three elective courses, and either four independent research tasks demonstrating professional expertise, or a minor dissertation

Compulsory (core) course

- Principles of Intellectual Property Law

Elective courses [three of the following]

- Electronic Intellectual Property Law
- Advanced Intellectual Property Law
- Intellectual Property Law, Development and Innovation
- One other course from the list offered by the Commercial Law department

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

NUMBER
OF
CREDITS

LLM (Professional Masters):
180 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each and
4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

FACT
Parliament is the national legislature (law-making body) of South Africa. As such, one of its major functions is to pass new laws, to amend existing laws, and to repeal or abolish old laws. This function is guided by the Constitution of South Africa, which governs and applies to all law and conduct within South Africa.





INTERNATIONAL LAW

Upholding justice beyond borders

Explore the dynamic field of International Law, where theory meets practice in shaping global policies and safeguarding fundamental rights across borders. In the globalised, interconnected context in which we live and work, International Law stands as a cornerstone of global governance and cooperation. Our International Law master's programme is designed to equip aspiring legal professionals with specialised expertise in a wide range of key areas, and students can choose from a list of electives including Law of International Trade, International Commercial Transactions Law, International Law of the Sea, and more.

Understanding International Law provides a foundation that addresses complex issues that transcend national boundaries, such as trade agreements, environmental protection, human rights, and international conflicts.





Career opportunities

Graduates of our program are prepared for diverse and impactful career opportunities, including international Human Rights lawyer advocating for the protection and promotion of human rights globally, and working with NGOs, international organisations, parastatals and governments; international Trade Consultant providing legal counsel on cross-border trade agreements, tariffs, and dispute resolution for multinational corporations and trade organisations; Diplomat or Foreign Service Officer representing national interests abroad, negotiating treaties, and participating in international diplomacy; or, amongst many other options, legal specialist with the skills and expertise to address global challenges, advise on international treaties, and promote justice on a global scale.

Programme structure

The curriculum comprises four elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor.

Four elective courses:

- Law of International Trade
- International Commercial Transactions Law
- International Law of the Sea
- International Law in Theory and Practice
- International Law on Disputes and Use of Force
- International Environmental Law
- International Rights of the Child
- International Protection of Human Rights
- International Protection of Women's Human Rights

Research component

- Minor Dissertation

NUMBER OF CREDITS

LLM/MPhil:

240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each,
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.



**INTERNATIONAL TAX MASTERS
(Interdisciplinary)**

Using International Taxation to bridge borders and optimise revenues

Mastering international taxation is key to effective navigation of the complexities of global commerce and finance. This specialised field focuses on understanding and applying tax laws across borders, ensuring compliance while optimising financial outcomes for governments, multinationals and individuals alike. By specialising in this field, professionals will gain the expertise to manage cross-border transactions efficiently, mitigate risks, and leverage tax incentives strategically to foster economic growth.

The International Taxation Master’s programme leverages UCT’s uncontested geographical advantage as a gateway for global engagement on fiscal matters between the developed and developing worlds. Importantly, the UCT International Taxation Master’s is an interdisciplinary programme based in legal and commercial science.



Career opportunities

As globalisation accelerates, the demand for skilled international tax professionals continues to rise, making this field very rewarding for those seeking to influence global financial landscapes. Graduates from the UCT International Taxation Master’s programme are sought after and have excellent career prospects, both in South Africa and elsewhere. The principled knowledge, analytical skill and ways of thinking gained from the programme are highly flexible in their application in a variety of career settings, including (amongst many) in advisory, law, accountancy, fiscal regulation, academia, and in-house expertise.

Past graduates from the UCT International Taxation Masters occupy positions such as International Tax Advisor, Consultant, Manager, Lawyer, Tax Director, Director, Group Tax Manager and Senior Lecturer within international accounting firms, boutique specialist international tax practices, leading local and international law firms, multinational corporates, universities, and government agencies including revenue authorities and Ministries of Finance.



Programme structure

The International Taxation Masters is a two-year programme. The courses in the first year are International Tax I and International Tax II. The coursework component combines these fields and is, therefore, the same for the MCom specialising in Taxation in the field of International Taxation and the LLM specialising in International Taxation.

In the second year, students focus on the research component. At the start of year 2, students need to make a choice whether they wish to complete a minor dissertation in law or commerce. Background and experience are important considerations in deciding which degree to pursue.

Over the course of the two years, students have unrestricted access to the IBFD online research platform, the Kluwer International Tax Database, the International Tax Law Reports and an impressive array of resources from all UCT libraries.

NUMBER
OF
CREDITS

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each,
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

 www.tax.uct.ac.za
 www.sals.uct.ac.za



FACT
A bill is a draft version of a law. Most bills are drawn up by a government department under direction of the relevant minister or deputy minister. This kind of bill must be approved by the Cabinet before being submitted to Parliament. Bills introduced by individual Members are called Private Members’ Legislative Proposals.

 Extract from the [South African parliament website](http://www.parliament.gov.za)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW

Facilitating economic growth through law

International Trade Law is central in today's globalised economy, in facilitating cross-border transactions, resolving disputes, and ensuring fair competition. Our International Trade Law master's programme offers excellent training in specialised areas such as Carriage of Goods by Sea, Commercial Arbitration, Competition Law, and more, preparing students to navigate the complexities of global commerce. Understanding International Trade Law is essential as it governs the rules and regulations that enable businesses to operate across borders smoothly and ethically.

Career opportunities

Graduates of our programme are equipped with the expertise to pursue many different careers, either as generalists or specialists, including as an International Trade lawyer specialising in advising businesses on trade agreements, import/export regulations, and dispute resolution mechanisms; as corporate counsel for multinationals, managing legal aspects of international transactions, compliance with trade laws, and negotiation of commercial contracts; in international mediation and arbitration facilitating resolution of trade disputes between multinational companies or states, utilising expertise in arbitration and mediation techniques; or, amongst many other options, working in government as a trade policy advisor, formulating trade policies at national or international levels, representing interests in trade negotiations and agreements.

Explore the dynamic field of International Trade Law, where theory meets practice in shaping global economic policies and fostering international business relationships. Prepare for a rewarding career where your legal expertise drives sustainable economic growth and global integration.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, and two elective courses; and either four research tasks (professional master’s) or a compulsory minor dissertation (coursework & dissertation master’s) of not more than 25,000 words on a topic related to International Trade Law and approved by the programme convenor.

Compulsory (core) courses

- Law of International Trade
- International Commercial Transactions Law

Two of the following

- Carriage of Goods by Sea
- Commercial Arbitration
- Competition Law
- Law, Regional Integration and Development in Africa
- Comparative Law and Business in Africa
- Chinese Law and Investments in Africa
- International Law in Theory and Practice (*Coursework & dissertation elective only*)
- International Environmental Law (*Coursework & dissertation elective only*)

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

NUMBER
OF
CREDITS

LLM (Professional Masters):
180 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each and
4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.



JUDICIAL STUDIES

The art of judging in a constitutional democracy

This one-year full-time (or two-year part-time) qualification is offered by the University of Cape Town’s School for Advanced Legal Studies, under the Faculty of Law. Working with the Judicial Institute for Africa, UCT Law offers this programme to professionals currently serving as judges and magistrates, and to those earmarked for the judicial track. The diploma provides a specialist qualification in judicial studies, ensuring that participants are exposed to concepts, developments, debates, and discussions in the judicial space across the continent.

This is Africa’s first postgraduate qualification in judicial studies, offered by Africa’s leading university. The diploma offers access to cutting-edge knowledge from diverse Faculty members, ensuring professionals are up to date with new issues in law.

Be part of a new generation of judges on the African continent who are practically and theoretically grounded in the art of judging in a constitutional democracy.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses and two elective courses and consists of 120 credits.

Core courses

- Judicial Skills and Practical Jurisprudence
- Judging in a Constitutional Democracy
- Electives
- Practical Approach to Evidence Law
- Practical Court Processes
- Regional Instruments, Courts, and Cases for Judicial Officers
- Law and Technology for Judicial Officers
- Environmental Law for Judicial Officers
- Independent Research Paper

Requirements to register

In addition to the basic qualification in law, applicants are required to demonstrate appointment as a judicial officer (judge, magistrate, or equivalent) or the potential for such appointment in the foreseeable future by including a letter of reference from an appropriate official.

Additional information is [available on the JIFA site](#)

NUMBER
OF
CREDITS

LLM/MPhil:
120 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each.



LABOUR LAW

Championing fairness in the workplace

Labour Law serves as the legal framework governing the rights and obligations of both employers and employees in the workplace, ensuring fair practices to foster harmonious work environments. This area of law serves as one of society's cornerstones to ensure equitable treatment and protection for employees while guiding employers in maintaining ethical and legal workplace practices. Through the establishment of clear guidelines on employment contracts, working conditions, fair pay, and dispute resolution, good legal frameworks for labour serve to ensure a balanced relationship between employers and employees.

Labour laws should safeguard basic rights such as fair pay and safe working conditions but also promote non-discrimination in hiring and promotion processes. As economies evolve, the significance of Labour Law grows, offering stability and confidence to both employers and employees through the complexities of today's workforce landscape. Effective use of Labour Law is therefore central to the fostering of sustainable business practices and nurturing a productive, harmonious work environment. Our Master's programme is designed to equip students with essential knowledge and expertise in regulating

employment relationships and workplace dynamics. The programme delves into various facets of Labour Law, including collective bargaining, employment equity, dispute resolution, and international labour standards. Students gain practical skills in navigating complex legal issues, advocating for employee rights, and advising businesses on compliance with labour regulations.

Career opportunities

This programme has the potential to open doors to diverse career opportunities in legal practice, human resources management, corporate compliance, and labour relations consultancy. Graduates will be well-prepared to contribute meaningfully in shaping fair labour practices and productive organisations through roles such as labour law attorney; HR Director; employment relations specialist; or corporate compliance officer.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, and two elective courses; and either four research tasks (professional master’s) or a compulsory minor dissertation (coursework & dissertation master’s) of not more than 25,000 words on a topic related to Labour Law and approved by the programme convenor.

Core Courses

- Collective Labour Law
- Individual Employment Law
- Workplace Discrimination and Equality Law

Elective course

- One Master’s course (Commercial Law)

Research component

- Professional Master’s: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

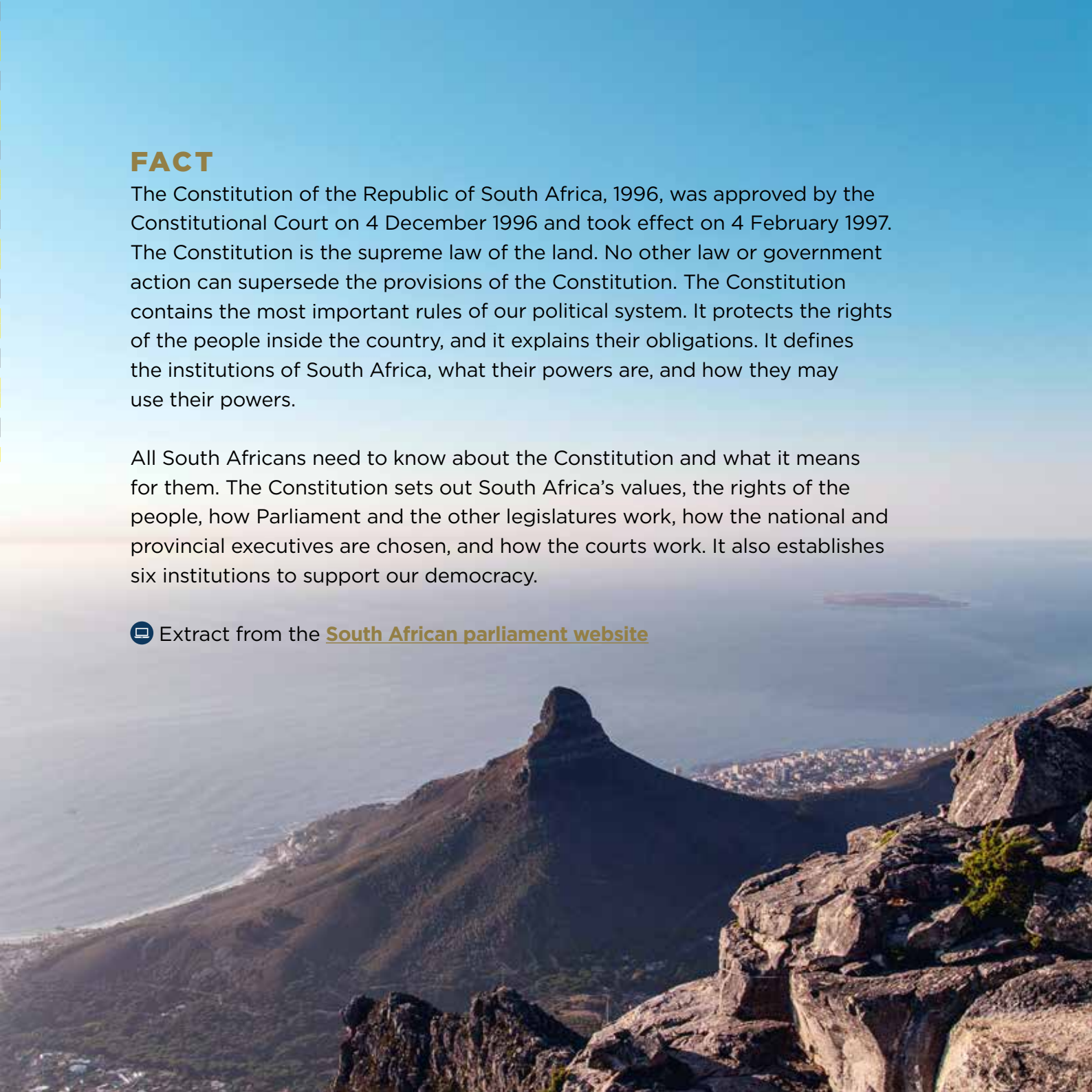


FACT

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, was approved by the Constitutional Court on 4 December 1996 and took effect on 4 February 1997. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. No other law or government action can supersede the provisions of the Constitution. The Constitution contains the most important rules of our political system. It protects the rights of the people inside the country, and it explains their obligations. It defines the institutions of South Africa, what their powers are, and how they may use their powers.

All South Africans need to know about the Constitution and what it means for them. The Constitution sets out South Africa’s values, the rights of the people, how Parliament and the other legislatures work, how the national and provincial executives are chosen, and how the courts work. It also establishes six institutions to support our democracy.

 Extract from the [South African parliament website](#)



NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM (Professional Masters):	LLM/MPhil:
	180 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.	240 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

LAW OF MINERAL AND PETROLEUM EXTRACTION AND USE

Nurturing sustainable development in the mining and extractives industry

Effective governance in the mining and extractives industry is fundamental to sustainable economic development, locally and globally. It ensures compliance with national and international laws and fosters transparency, accountability, and responsible resource management. Legal frameworks governing mineral and petroleum extraction play a key role in regulating the exploration, extraction, and utilisation of natural resources as critical elements of economic development in South Africa and beyond.

This specialised area of law governs the rights, responsibilities, and environmental obligations of stakeholders involved in mining and extractive activities, and encompasses a spectrum of legal frameworks that address licensing, environmental protection, community engagement, and revenue distribution. The purpose of this area of law is to ensure sustainable development and economic growth.



The Master's in Law of Mineral and Petroleum Extraction and Use reviews the various relationships between the mining sector and government, society, communities, the environment, employees, and others - a multi-stakeholder perspective which offers a practical and multi-disciplinary approach, affording unique and context-based insights into the complexities of the sector.

Topics covered across the programme include, amongst others, governance; licensing; foreign investment; expropriation; corporate social responsibility; Black Economic Empowerment; environmental obligations; technical considerations; crime; stakeholder obligations; zoning; critical minerals; and the energy transition.

Career opportunities

The broad array of topics indicated above provides a comprehensive overview of the sector, and specialist knowledge of the legal facets of mineral and petroleum extraction and use. A Master's in Law of Mineral and Petroleum Extraction and Use prepares graduates for rewarding careers in this specialised field - including, amongst many others, roles such as mineral rights lawyer; environmental compliance manager; corporate counsel for mining companies; or policy advisor in government agencies.

Programme structure

The programme can be done as either an LLM, or for those students without a legal background, an MPhil, and can be undertaken as a coursework degree or as coursework with a minor dissertation.

Compulsory (core) courses

- Comparative Mineral Law in Africa
- Negotiating Extractive Agreements and Mining Contracts
- Resource Revenue Law

Elective courses [one of the following]

- Property Law in a Constitutional Order
- Oil and Gas Law in South Africa
- Extractives Law and the Energy Transition
- Natural Resources Law
- Any approved law elective

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

 www.law.uct.ac.za/mineral-law

NUMBER
OF
CREDITS

LLM (Professional Masters):
180 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each and
4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.

LLM/MPhil:
240 credits
4 courses @ 30 credits each
and a dissertation @ 120 credits.





MARINE & ENVIRONMENTAL LAW / ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Promoting sustainability through law

As global awareness continues to grow regarding the significant and varied challenges facing the earth and the myriad species reliant on it for their survival, both global and domestic law and policymakers have turned to law as one potential solution to manage these challenges and ensure the long-term survival of species. Not surprisingly, the disciplines of environmental and marine law have seen significant growth over the past few decades both in the international and domestic context. They are both critical and exciting areas of law to engage in, with a growing number of opportunities emerging in a wide variety of contexts for those with expertise in these areas of law.

In response to the proliferation in frequency and type of environmental crisis, and with a view to responding to the need to build additional capacity in these still-developing areas of law, the Faculty's Institute for Marine & Environmental Law offers a number of postgraduate qualifications specialising in either Environmental Law or Marine & Environmental Law.

This postgraduate programme is the largest dedicated programme in Africa focusing specifically on both marine and environmental law. Specialist courses are crafted to ensure exposure to all relevant areas of marine and environmental law – from both a local and international perspective.

Career opportunities

As the need to prioritise our marine and environmental future becomes ever-more urgent, so the range of opportunities for Marine & Environmental Law specialists grows. Graduates of our Master's programme find opportunities and roles such as environmental policy advisor for government agencies, non-governmental organisations, or international bodies; environmental lawyer, representing clients in legal matters related to, for example, environmental protection, land use, and resource management; marine conservation specialist, focusing on issues like marine biodiversity, sustainable fisheries, and the impact of climate change on oceans, and being involved in policy development, research, and advocacy to protect marine environments; and – amongst many others – corporate sustainability officer, working in the corporate sector to ensure business compliance with environmental laws and regulations.



Programme structure

The curriculum depends on the programme (Environmental Law, or Marine & Environmental Law) and the degree type (Professional Master’s or Coursework & Dissertation Master’s). The options are detailed below:

Environmental Law

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, and two elective courses. For Master’s programmes, the additional requirements is either four research tasks (professional master’s) or a compulsory minor dissertation (coursework & dissertation master’s) of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic and approved by the programme convenor.

Compulsory (core) course

- Principles of Environmental Law

Elective courses [three of the following]

- International Environmental Law
- Land Use Planning Law
- Natural Resources Law
- Pollution Law

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation



NUMBER OF CREDITS	PGDip:	Professional Master’s:	LLM/MPhil:
	120 credits	180 credits	240 credits
	4 courses	4 courses	4 courses
	@ 30 credits each.	@ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks	@ 30 credits each and a dissertation
		@ 15 credits each.	@ 120 credits.



Marine & Environmental Law

The curriculum comprises two compulsory courses, and two elective courses. For Master’s programmes, the additional requirements is either four research tasks (professional master’s) or a compulsory minor dissertation (coursework & dissertation master’s) of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic and approved by the programme convenor.

Compulsory (core) courses

- International Law of the Sea
- International Environmental Law

Elective courses [two of the following]

- Principles of Environmental Law
- Land Use Planning Law
- Natural Resources Law
- Pollution Law

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

 www.sals.uct.ac.za



NUMBER OF CREDITS	PGDip:	Professional Master’s:	LLM/MPhil:
	120 credits	180 credits	240 credits
	4 courses	4 courses	4 courses
	@ 30 credits each.	@ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks	@ 30 credits each and a dissertation
		@ 15 credits each.	@ 120 credits.

PUBLIC LAW

Where rights meet responsibilities, and where law meets public interest

This is the realm of legal governance and societal impact. Addressing the dynamic interaction between individuals, governments, and institutions, Public Law is a cornerstone discipline in South Africa and globally where you come to explore constitutional law, administrative law, human rights, and more, gaining in-depth insights into the ways in which legal frameworks both shape public policy and uphold justice. Prospective students will engage deeply with current legal debates and challenges, honing critical thinking and analytical skills essential for legal practice, advocacy, and policymaking.

Career opportunities

Our programme equips graduates to navigate complex legal landscapes, advocating for justice and societal change in roles that include, amongst others, a constitutional lawyer; a human rights advocate or public interest litigator; a government policy analyst; and a legal advisor for nonprofit and international organisations.



Programme structure

The curriculum comprises four elective courses and a compulsory minor dissertation of not more than 25,000 words on a related topic approved by the programme convenor.

Four courses can be selected from the following:

- Constitutional and Administrative Law
- Criminology, Law and Society
- Environmental Law
- Human Rights Law
- International Law
- Marine and Environmental Law

Research component

- Coursework & Dissertation Master's: Minor Dissertation

NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM/MPhil:
	240 credits
	4 courses @ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits

SHIPPING LAW

Providing the compass for navigating Shipping Law

This field of law is critical in the global economy, facilitating the movement of goods, fostering trade relationships, and ensuring maritime safety. As the backbone of international trade, shipping law governs a wide array of legal issues, including contracts, insurance, environmental regulations, and admiralty matters.

If you're a law graduate seeking to specialise in shipping & maritime law, or a practising maritime professional wanting to expand your legal knowledge, or perhaps someone passionate about environmental and international law looking to address the evolving challenges of the maritime & shipping industry, our postgraduate diploma, LLM and Professional Masters are all great options for you.

Career opportunities

A postgraduate qualification in Shipping Law offers a great advantage for aspiring legal professionals. It will equip you with an in-depth understanding of the complex legal framework surrounding maritime activities, enabling you to navigate disputes and provide expert counsel to multinationals, shipping companies, port authorities, trade authorities and representatives, and government bodies. A specialised postgraduate qualification in shipping law enhances your prospects for opportunities in law firms, multinational corporations, maritime arbitration centres, and government agencies, amongst many other entities.

Programme structure

Each of the postgraduate options have different requirements and structures, and are taught accordingly. While courses are taught at the applicable level, the requirements across the qualifications are the same in terms of course work - requiring the completion of three core courses, and a choice of one of the two electives on offer. The remaining requirements depend on which qualification you are pursuing and can include none (Postgraduate Diploma); additional research tasks for each course (Professional Master's); or a dissertation (25,000 words) on a topic that you propose (Coursework & dissertation Master's).



FACT

South Africa has a range of different kinds of courts, serving various social, civil, criminal and economic needs. Besides our APEX court, the Constitutional Court; our Supreme Court of Appeal; and a high court in each province, we also have Magistrate’s Courts, Children’s Courts, Sexual Offences Courts; Maintenance Courts; Equality Courts; Small Claims Courts; Specialised Commercial Crimes Courts; Traditional Courts; Land Courts; Land Claims Courts; Labour Courts; and Tax Courts. In addition, there are military courts and tribunals. All of these together work to ensure the fair administration of the law and of justice in South Africa.



Core courses

- Maritime Law
- Carriage of Goods by Sea
- Marine Insurance Law

Electives (choose one)

- Admiralty Jurisdiction and Practice
- International Law of the Sea

Research component

- PG Diploma: none
- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master’s: Minor Dissertation

 www.sals.uct.ac.za



NUMBER OF CREDITS	PGDip: 120 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each.	LLM (Professional Master’s): 180 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.	LLM/MPhil: 240 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits.
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TAX LAW

Expertise in the complex realm of taxation

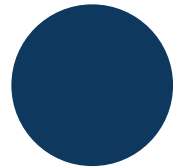
As tax laws continually evolve, professionals with up-to-date expertise are in high demand. Our postgraduate programme in South African tax law equips participants with an in-depth understanding of the intricate regulations and legislation applicable in this area in South Africa, and ensures that participants are equipped with the tools to navigate complex tax structures, interpret legislation accurately, and offer sound legal advice to clients, including business, organisations and individuals.

Whether you're an aspiring tax attorney, accountant, corporate advisor, government official, or other specialist working in the tax field, our postgraduate options in Tax Law will enrich your knowledge and enable you to develop strategies for clients that minimise tax liability while maximising compliance. The specialised insights developed through postgraduate study will ensure enhanced career prospects. These programmes enable participants to become invaluable assets in guiding clients through complicated tax scenarios.

With its complex regulatory landscape and always-evolving tax codes, South Africa offers a wealth of opportunities for professionals to specialise and advance their careers in tax law. This postgraduate specialisation offers numerous benefits that extend beyond traditional legal education.

Career opportunities

Our programme options are ideal for recent law graduates looking to specialise in tax law, as well as experienced legal and tax practitioners seeking to refine their skills; for financial professionals aiming to gain a comprehensive understanding of taxation; for business owners aiming to navigate tax intricacies efficiently; and for those working in government tax entities and policy development environments.



Programme structure

The Tax Law postgraduate options include an LLM or MPhil, and a Professional Master's. Each of these has different requirements and a different programme structure. Further information is in the Faculty handbook and on our Programmes pages (see link below).

The Tax Law specialisation does not accommodate any elective courses. All four courses are core courses:

- General Tax Law Provisions
- Specific Tax Law Provisions
- Tax Treaty Law
- Tax Policy in a Developmental Context

Research component

- Professional Masters: Research task for each course
- Coursework & Dissertation Master's: Minor Dissertation

 www.sals.uct.ac.za

NUMBER OF CREDITS	LLM (Professional Masters): 180 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and 4 research tasks @ 15 credits each.	LLM/MPhil: 240 credits 4 courses @ 30 credits each and a dissertation @ 120 credits.

FACT
Taxes and tax rates are governed through the law. Most of the country's income comes from corporate and personal taxes, with 23.9 million of its 59 million citizens eligible for personal income tax. Nonetheless, indirect taxes, like Value-Added Tax (VAT), account for almost a third of the government's revenue.





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