

CILEX Pilot Evaluation and analysis — assessment results and module survey

The following pages contain analysis of assessment results (specifically in subject areas covered) and survey feedback.

All candidates who took the full assessment regime of a Skills assessment (oral and written elements) and a Multiple Choice Question (“MCQ”) Knowledge assessment, passed.

There are a number of students who did not sit in December 2021 or sat only one of the components, who now need to be progressed towards assessment completion in the Spring of 2022.

Executive summary

The pilot has worked well, producing successful results for those taking the assessments and (albeit with a small response base) satisfaction on the part of students when surveyed.

Three key areas are recommended for overall enhancement.

1) The module should be offered on a part-time 24 week basis rather than the 12 week full-time basis, to enable module students to engage more fully in light of other commitments.

Full time study appears to have been too demanding for most, and is an evident trend in survey feedback with questions both directly and indirectly touching upon this. Additionally, anecdotal feedback received during module delivery was that module candidates struggled to fit the work in and, for some, to adapt to learning in this way.

This is the principal structural recommendation and it is expected that with such a change, module satisfaction will increase.

2) The Civil Litigation syllabus content on trial procedure and conducting trial should be reviewed and, if necessary, excised with guidance given to all candidates where such knowledge and training may be acquired elsewhere within the CILEX Regulation scheme.

3) Instigate a stricter final (and particularly for assessment-only, earlier) enrolment deadline to enable more settled onboarding and enable fuller understanding of delivery and demands, and better enabling the University response to digital literacy development, return to learning and disability / learning support requirements.

The final page of this analysis provided comparative commentary on assessment results for the December 2021 cohort; the comparator being FHEQ Level 7 Legal Practice Course performance.

Analysis – MCQ Knowledge examination December 2021

The results are available separately.

To maintain a division between delivery and assessment, MCQ Knowledge questions were taken from the postgraduate professional assessment bank for ULaw as is already developed for LPC and SQE purposes and were created by specific question designers experienced in the syllabus areas who did not deliver module materials or supervision / feedback to students.

This analysis is provided to determine whether there were any significant subject areas in which candidates struggled, across the 45 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) in the Knowledge examinations. To determine whether (in the event of a very low score) there is a consistent coverage point that may needed addressing with future iterations (be it removal from syllabus if covered by other means open to CILEX Regulation, or amplified in module).

For these purposes candidates are not split into Module & Assessment and Assessment-only. All the candidates for a subject took the same examination.

Any question with a score with 67% of the candidates getting the answer correct is not analysed. Question areas identified, however these will not have been the only questions in the given area; only a trend if the question area appears more than once.

Civil Litigation

Question area	Correct answers	Comment
Witness expenses at trial	22.22%	May be something of a trend with trial procedure – questions in this area (albeit not all of them) tended to be answered less successfully
Ramification of failing to put postcode on document to be served by court	55.55%	Specific detail from CPR at higher end of knowledge – closed book examination – gives stronger students opportunity
Admissibility of hearsay in civil matters	11.11%	Not really a trial procedure issue as is central to taking proofs/drafting statements – may be a matter to re-emphasise in course.
Orders a DJ may make in response to opponent's failure to comply with directions	55.55%	May depend on experience of hearings
Trial procedure and disclosure of relevant but unhelpful authority – conduct point	44.44%	Although a conduct point all should be aware of regardless, a trial procedure point on the face of it
Part 36	55.55%	Inherently challenging aspect of the area

Correctness of statement of truth	55.55%	Two very similar sets of wording used (but were different and question is good) – precision of reading
Drafting a claim form	11.11%	Question required identification of “WRONG” thing to do – wording may have been overlooked by candidates; valid and straightforward area otherwise.
Deemed service rules	55.55%	Viable question, just a matter of picking the right date for the right type. Can be tricky for a closed-book exercise. Allows stronger to shine.
Use of QC at trial, costs reasonableness	11.11%	Query trial procedure point.
Precise content of expert report	11.11%	Depended on knowledge of precise rule in CPR – tricky for a closed book exercise but very strongest will shine
Undertaking to court and potential contempt issue	55.55%	Possible trial procedure point (most answered correctly, however)
Post trial inspection hearing	55.55%	As above

Actions for Civil Litigation module

Potential trend with questions about handling witnesses and courtroom demeanour at trial – to review content as assessable. This may be material covered elsewhere in CILEX regime and need not be covered, albeit those with a professional conduct/regulation angle are validly retained to cover that area; some further emphasis of professional conduct is worth engineering – conduct questions could and should have got higher marks.

A further review of the trial/evidence questions identified above in distinguishing performance of module students and assessment-only candidates was inconclusive; assessment-only candidates, in principle more experienced given the eligibility for the assessment-only variant, did get correct answers here but that may depend on opportunities offered to them in their specific practice; that may be chance.

Conveyancing

Question area	Correct answers	Comment
Indemnity covenants	50%	Routine area, may be issue of wider exposure in practice
VAT position on completion	50%	Query level of experience of candidates on this point
Contract rate	50%	As above
Ramifications of a delay by purchaser when seller ready to complete	16.7%	Four different options but all fairly similar – may depend on level of experience
Registration of lease dependent on duration	16.7%	Of those questions not answered quite so well, perhaps a trend with leasehold material?
Absence of landlord consent to adjustments	33.3%	As above
Securing vacant possession	50%	As above
Grounds for vacant possession	50%	As above

Actions for Conveyancing module

Perhaps not as clear a case for consideration as trial matters for Civil Litigation – leasehold is obviously fundamental and needs to remain as part of the module and assessable, and more basic questions in the area were answered well; possibly finer / higher level points of knowledge here in those questions that were not answered as successfully.

Analysis – survey January 2022

An end-of pilot survey was issued in January 2022. Questions about module materials and module supervision were not asked of the Assessment-only contingents for either subject.

Some HESA relevant questions were added to the survey (demographic, background) in order to enable the University's HESA reporting obligations. These are not reproduced here

Module and Assessment candidates

Five candidates replied to the survey, so a low base giving high percentage outcomes to each candidate. Three responses from Conveyancing module students, two from Civil Litigation.

Without wishing to single out, the asterisks identify the experience of one candidate – upon enquiry with administrative and supervision teams, this candidate's primary issues were with IT at the candidate's end causing some accessibility issues to material, and time to engage with the full service on what was a full-time timetable. The student took the Conveyancing module so their experience is not borne out by the other two Conveyancing module students who have responded.

The general pattern is positive, actions are proposed.

Question / Proposition	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Reflection and proposed actions
The materials are good at explaining things	80%	20%*		Will be subject to updating for each academic year.
Materials and supervisors have made the materials interesting	80%	20%*		As above and allocation of appropriate tutors will be discussed with Online Campus providing them
Feedback on work has been prompt	80%		20%*	Good although there may be isolated incident with this one student; review explanation in induction about how feedback will manifest itself.
The module is well organised	100%			Noted, always open to review and amplifying student guidance for induction purposes.
The module is running smoothly	60%	40%		Noted – perhaps an opportunity if part-time variant

				introduced to do some more in-module cross-checking (rather than end of course survey). Not many issues identified to programme management, however.
I had adequate opportunity to provide feedback on all elements of my module	60%	20%	20%*	As above – a longer timeframe may provide more opportunity
The workload is manageable	20%	60%	20%*	This may push towards the offering of a part time version giving these candidates more opportunity to engage
The module does not apply unnecessary pressure on me as a student	40%	40%	20%*	Similar point – tends to suggest offering a part time version over a longer period of time would be welcomed
I am given enough time to understand the things I have learned	40%	40%	20%*	As above – trend where more than the one student is providing neutral or negative responses appears to be the timeframe for the module.
Supervisors ensured that I engaged with and understood the module outcomes	80%		20%*	Generally satisfactory result – may have needed some further expectation management for the one outlier
The supervision has provided detailed guidance	80%	20%*		Noted

Feedback on my work has helped me clarify the things I did not understand	80%	20%*		Noted – aim should be 100% but can review with allocated tutors
My feedback on the module is listened to and valued	80%	20%*		Noted (slightly out of line with earlier question in similar area?); again, longer timeframe for delivery may assist in collating and ironing out issues during module
The criteria used in marking was made clear in advance	80%		20%*	Students are issued guidance prior to mock assessment – will be reviewed in update
Assessment arrangements have been organised	60%	20%	20%*	Noted; to review with assessments team if specific issues arose.
Assessment methods employed required in-depth understanding of the module content	100%			Pleasing, especially on rigour of this alternative route.
I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	80%	20%*		Generally fine although again can review the management of expectation about this / identify more clearly optimum methods of communicating.
I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	80%		20%*	May be a specific incident with outlier but will also look at optimum delivery of information about wider ULaw services open to students eg any disability support

				requirement (and timeliness of capturing this information), wider study skills support, especially if returning to learning / new to online.
Good advice was available when I needed academic guidance	80%	20%*		Satisfactory – combined with above, more investigation may lie with wider services beyond the pure academic coverage.
The library resources and services met my needed	80%	20%*		Can make more use of this resource if a part time version is offered?
I have been able to access IT resources when I needed to	60%	20%*	20%	Slightly ambiguous – may mean own IT assets – candidates were not on site at ULaw. Review guidance on systems requirements
The Year Planner works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned	20%	40%	40%	Ambiguous question to an extent – may be a further point related to part-time offering preferred
I am satisfied with the Student Union at the University	20%	80%		Neutral outcome – visibility of Student Union can be reviewed – may make more use of SU if on a longer part time version?
My induction/enrolment	80%	20%*		Induction will always be reviewed, cohort

on the course was smooth				on cohort; satisfactory for a pilot where candidates were being added last-minute.
Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the module	80%	20%*		Noted, maintain standards, seek to improve this
Overall I have enjoyed my module	80%		20%*	Noted
I would recommend the University of Law to others	80%		20%*	Noted

Assessment-only candidates

Eight submissions of survey, which was shorter as it did not need to deal with the module delivery itself.

5 results from candidates taking Civil Litigation, 3 from Conveyancing. Results are more mixed, although still trending positive, and does lead to a reflection on the time available for such candidates, both generally and the lead-in to assessment. Conclusion that more time (if not more material) is made available to these candidates and a stricter and earlier closing point to enrol should be enforced to heighten the overall experience.

Question / Proposition	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Reflection and proposed actions
The criteria used in marking was made clear in advance	75%		25%	Critical to ensuring the information on Assessment-only is correct and timely. May be a timing issue rather than content
Assessment arrangements have been organised	37.5%	25%	37.5%	Timing of information and clarity of instruction to be reviewed – timing again may be issue – lead-in for assessment-only should be enhanced and late enrollers pushed to next delivery
Assessment methods employed required in-depth	87.5%	12.5%		Good, goes to rigour – consider changing

understanding of the module content				“module” to “subject” for Assessment-only
I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	75%		25%	Enrolment timing to be reviewed to enable a (if short-term) relationship with the University to develop
I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	62.5%		37.5%	Longer lead-in to absorb information should be considered
Good advice was available when I needed academic guidance	37.5%	37.5%	25%	With assessment-only, candidates are not “on” for very long – satisfactory response here suggests responsiveness to these shorter-term candidates but question may need review
The library resources and services met my needs	62.5%	25%	12.5%	Interesting – they don’t really need to use the library but demonstrates some engagement with wider provision of services (they do have access to library and are given an introduction to it)
I have been able to access IT resources when I need to	62.5%	25%	12.5%	Point as with module students – may be issue with “own” IT rather than ULaw but systems and compatibility guidance will be reviewed
The year planner works efficiently as	12.5%	87.5%		Unsurprising – no year planner

far as my activities are concerned				issued but they do have an assessment timetable and planner. Question may be redundant for this Assessment-only variant.
I am satisfied with the Student Union at the University	25%	75%		Possibly not with ULaw long enough to be aware / make use
My induction/enrolment on the course was smooth	50%	12.5%	32.5%	Noted – this is time critical for assessment-only candidates so open to review even if a generally satisfactory response.
Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the module	32.5%	12.5%	50%	Word “module” needs review – may be distracting? May be an experience point rather than specifically on quality of material (not otherwise criticised to same extent).
Overall I have enjoyed my module	50%	12.5%	32.5%	As above – use of word “module” not appropriate and enjoyment factor may be inextricably linked to time factor
I would recommend the University of Law to others	50%	50%		Noted. Again, may be “time available” issues here.

Comparative analysis – Legal Practice Course

The University of Law has delivered the Legal Practice Course (“LPC”) since the course’s inception in the 1990s, and will continue to do so on a taught-out basis until the transitional period for SQE ends.

This will ultimately provide experience of delivering and maintaining quality and standards for the LPC over a four decade span.

In June 2021 the University was awarded 5 stars in the World University Rankings, by global higher education analysts, QS (Quacquarelli Symonds). QS states a typical five-star institution is “generally world-class in a broad range of areas, enjoys an excellent reputation and has cutting-edge facilities and internationally renowned research and teaching faculty.”

As well as achieving an overall 5 Star rating as an institution and for the Law subject, the University achieved 5 stars in Teaching, Employability, Online Learning, Academic Development and Inclusiveness. The CILEX Pilot was delivered online using methodology adopted for the LPC Online, which in various iterations the University has run for more than 10 years.

Regarding inclusiveness, which has been touched upon elsewhere in this analysis, freely available on the University’s website, the University has published its Access and Participation plan to 2024-25:

[theuniversityoflaw_app_2020-21_v1_10039956.pdf](#)

As a result of longstanding relationships with a number of demanding international and national law firms, and the reputation as a provider of both of quality and volume in the wider LPC retail market, the University has built a robust and quality-assured bank of multiple choice questions (“MCQs”) at FHEQ Level 7 over a considerable number of years.

The questions used for the CILEX Pilot in December were taken from this bank of LPC questions.

Comparison - narrative

A direct comparison to LPC performance is not precisely possible because the questions were – appropriately – not taken from one specific LPC examination, but from across the Level 7 bank.

By the date of this report, the first publication of SQE results has passed and comparative conclusions may also be drawn from that. The nature of the Skills Component for the CILEX Pilot was perhaps closer to SQE2, but the MCQ Knowledge Component is generally comparable in spirit to the structure of SQE1.

The experience of the writer (stated at the end) points to the following in respect of CILEX Pilot participant performance:

1. It would be rare in oral skills assessments for all LPC candidates to pass (be “Competent”) first time. The trend for LPC is in the region of 92%-95% first time pass. The CILEX Pilot Skills Component oral element was similar in nature to LPC Interviewing, using similar assessment criteria, although it is the view of the writer that the subject coverage for Civil Litigation was more demanding than would be used for LPC. What spoke particularly to the CILEX Pilot candidates’ prior experience was their ability and general confidence / comfort with engaging with a “client”, which can be the downfall of less experienced LPC students. This does speak to the benefit of CILEX Pilot candidates’ prior experience and opportunities to date. There was no discernible difference here between module & assessment and assessment-only candidates, other than the latter, presumably a result of more experience, seemed yet more confident in demonstrating good client rapport.

2. Similarly, with the written element of the Skills component, for an LPC equivalent (Legal Writing) the pass mark historically, whilst high, has not tended to be as high as demonstrated here. Again, the benefit of previous experience without doubt enabled the CILEX Pilot candidates to produce credible - Competent - work.

3. There will have been, and there always will be, LPC candidates who do not pass MCQ exams or gain under half marks on any MCQ component in an exam comprised of MCQs and written exercises.

Notes to December 2021 results

1. Student status: To allay any concern, the notation on the set of results provided of "Fail (Absent)" is a technical matter for the University system. Absence from an assessment is technically a Fail (the system is required to record either Pass or Fail; there is no "blank" status) but all absent candidates were granted additional first attempts, and these are being arranged for the Spring of 2022. It is hoped that the recommendation provided by the Executive Summary here, for a longer module duration may enable greater uptake of assessment point; also that the University reviews and maintains the cut-off point for enrolment, not least for assessment-only candidates, to enable familiarity with the University and arranging time with employer to take the assessments.

2. Funded (by CILEX) vs self-funded performance (MCQ – for those completing):

Funded average: 78%; non-funded average 69%

3: Module vs. assessment-only performance (MCQ – for those completing):

Module average: 78%; assessment-only average 70%

(There was one funded + assessment-only candidate, who scored 82%)

The nature and source of funding appears to make a difference but most non-funded candidates were assessment-only; timing of the assessments and lead-in preparedness for it has been considered earlier in this report. Taking the full module does appear to give a dividend (as one may expect) in terms of performance but evidently assessment-only choice does still enable high-level success. Were the assessment graded in line with LPC, 70% is Distinction level.

There may be a number of influencer factors: assessment-only students will be less experienced with the University systems but more experienced in the field; module students the reverse, and with the additional benefit of time to settle to learning.

This is very high-level performance overall and certainly comparable - albeit on a broad basis - with the performance and aptitudes of the highest-achieving LPC students.

Richard Haggett
The University of Law
February 2022

Tutor 2002 to date

Deputy Director Vocational (Head of LPC) – Chester and Manchester – 2004 to 2010

Campus Dean Manchester 2009 to 2012

Head of Clients (concentrating on online provision) – 2012 to 2015

National Programme Director, Online Postgraduate Law Programmes (with LPC by far the largest of these) – 2015 to date.

