

LL.M. in International Business Law GUIDELINES FOR THE LL.M. PAPER AND PRESENTATION

1. OBJECTIVE

The LL.M. Paper and Presentation is an integral part of the LL.M. in International Business Law for which successful students are awarded 10 ECTS (the equivalent of 2 LL.M. courses). The Paper and Presentation consist of a written work and an oral presentation supported by a visual aid. The objectives of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation are to develop:

- **expertise** in a field of the program of the LL.M. in International Business Law;
- capabilities in the areas of legal **research** and legal **analysis**; and
- skills in legal **writing** and **oral presentation**.

2. FORMAT

Students have some flexibility in terms of the written format and oral component of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation. For example, students may:

- Academic Article: write an abbreviated law review style article and defend the opinion orally;
- Legal Submission: write a mock third party submission to a court or arbitral tribunal arguing for an interpretation of the law and present those arguments to a mock court/tribunal;
- Client Memo: draft a detailed client memo on an open question of law based on a case study and present the findings to a mock client board of directors; or
- Legal Opinion: draft a legal opinion for a hypothetical transaction and outline this to the client.

Regardless of the written format, an oral presentation is required in which students present their findings to academics or to a mock client or court for example. Students will be required to respond to questions from their audience. The presentation should be accompanied by a visual aid such as a power point, canva, or even objects if useful! Students will learn how to present their work, develop their argumentation and sustain their points of view or advice.

3. TOPIC

- The LL.M. Paper and Presentation is an independent and original project.
- The topic must be within a field of the program of the LL.M. in International Business Law and relevant to one or several of the eight core LL.M. courses.
- Students should choose a topic on which there are unanswered legal questions or controversial legal matters, where multiple opinions have been expressed in legal writing and/or case law or, in the example of a case study or opinion, where the application of the law is not self-evident. Students must identify a controversial legal issue and take a position or advise on it or advocate for an application of the law. A mere description of legislation or case law or a legal issue is not sufficient.

The LL.M. Paper and Presentation should reflect the student's personal position or considered legal advice on a legal topic and should be grounded in research. Students will become acquainted with the process of finding research materials, analyzing and synthesizing them, drawing conclusions and writing in the appropriate format.

Students must adopt the correct style and tone according to the format. Opinions will follow a specific format whereas case analysis and court submissions will be different. Students who choose to write an abbreviated law review style paper must adopt a scientific and argumentative nature rather than provide a mere description.

4. SEMINARS

In preparation and as support for the LL.M. Paper and Presentation, three seminars are offered first semester. The first seminar is held early in the year and focuses on the various format options, identifying topics, specific organization of a research paper, research resources and technical matters such as about footnoting, use of GenAI and plagiarism.

The second seminar is focused on legal writing techniques. The emphasis is on writing in a clear and concise manner in “plain English.”

The final seminar will provide instruction and coaching on how to be effective in oral presentations. The seminar will also give instruction on creating useful visual aids to enhance presentations.

Attendance at the seminars is mandatory.

5. TIMETABLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is essential that students respect all deadlines in order to complete the LL.M. Paper and Presentation. One-time extensions will only be granted in exceptional and compelling circumstances, for January of the *following* academic year (meaning that the LL.M. will not be completed in June of the academic year of enrollment), subject to an additional fee.

The LL.M. Paper and Presentation is designed to be completed in **one semester**. At the beginning of the academic year, Students elect to complete the LL.M. Paper and Presentation either in the Fall or the Spring semester. This will be done as part of overall curriculum planning for Optional Modules to ensure an optimal schedule. Below is an overview of the specific timing and responsibilities.

1. Student considers what areas of the curriculum are of most interest and meets with the Academic Coordinator to discuss the areas of interest and preferred format(s), if any. Students may come with specific, narrow topics to propose but if not will be guided by the Supervisor. The Academic Coordinator in consultation with the student will identify an appropriate faculty Supervisor.
2. **By October 10/March 2:** Student should contact the Supervisor to obtain the agreement of the faculty member to supervise, and to have an initial exchange about potential topics for and formats of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation.

3. **By October 31/March 20:** Student should have reached an agreement with the Supervisor about the topic and format of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation and should have informed the Academic Coordinator of the same.
4. **By December 1/April 20:** Student works independently to complete most of research for the LL.M. Paper and Presentation and has progress meeting with Supervisor to present findings of research and proposal for content of the written submission. The progress meeting is the main opportunity to get feedback on research, conclusions and structure of the Paper so Student should be prepared to present findings and pose questions at the progress meeting.
5. **January 5/May 20:** written paper is due.
6. **End of exam period in January/late exam period in June:** Orals with Supervisor and Academic Coordinator. Written aid to be sent by email to the Academic Coordinator and Supervisor at the latest 24 hours before the presentation.

6. GUIDANCE

Academic Coordinator

Students are offered three Seminars as described above. The Academic Coordinator is available to meet to support students on the process and topics covered in the seminars. Students may request meetings or electronic discussions with the Academic Coordinator for questions of structure and methodology and with the Supervisor for questions of substance.

Supervisor

The Supervisor provides guidance to the student on the following: the proposed topic and format for the LL.M. Paper and Presentation, with a view to helping the student to identify a controversial legal question which the student can delve into in an appropriate format. The Supervisor will provide suggestions for research materials as appropriate, and guidance on the structure of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation which may vary depending on the format chosen.

The Supervisor provides oral feedback in a progress meeting to guide the Student on the accuracy of conclusions, thoroughness of research and structuring before the Student writes the LL.M. Assessment. For the avoidance of doubt, the Supervisor does not comment on a draft of the Paper. The Supervisor provides guidance to the student throughout the research and writing process.

The term 'guidance' includes, as appropriate, electronic communications, physical meetings and any other form of contact with the student with a view to assisting the student in completing his/her LL.M. Assessment. Students should initiate contact on the LL.M. Paper and Presentation process by email (or in person at the end of classes) after meeting with the Academic Coordinator. Students should wait 5 days before sending a reminder to a Supervisor in the event that the Supervisor does not respond to an email immediately but should not hesitate to send a reminder after 5 days.

Students are requested not to systematically copy the Academic Coordinator on all correspondence with the Supervisor. If the Student encounters any difficulty in reaching the Supervisor, the student should contact the Academic Coordinator to discuss this so that the Academic Coordinator can provide appropriate support.

7. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

Length

The LL.M Paper should be **no more than 6000** words excluding preface, table of contents, footnotes, bibliography, tables and annexes. The word count should be included on the cover page of the Paper.

Format

Format should be Times New Roman, size 12, spacing 1.5 line and standard margins of Word/Open Office.

Oral Paper and Presentation

Students will present the LL.M. Paper and Presentation at the end of the exam period in January or June in front of the Supervisor and Academic Coordinator. Student should be prepared to give an approximately 20 minute presentation on the main and salient points of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation and will be asked to respond to remarks and questions. Student should prepare a visual aid. The Oral defense will be approximately 45 minutes in total and is a significant component of the LL.M. Paper and Presentation .

Written Paper

The LL.M. Paper should be sent electronically to the Academic Coordinator and Supervisor on the due date. Electronic copies should be in pdf format entitled: “last name first name LL.M. Paper.” One hard copy (does not need to be officially bound) of the LL.M. Paper must be delivered to the Academic Coordinator within 2 business days after the due date.

AI Disclosure Form

The LL.M. Paper must be accompanied by a signed pdf of the AI disclosure form which is filled out in a true and accurate fashion. Recognizing that Generative AI (“AI”) is a tool that may be employed to support research and learning, many uses of AI are allowed provided that they are disclosed and comply with the rules summarized in the AI disclosure form. The LL.M. Paper must be a personal, original work representing the ideas, research and analysis of the student. The student should be able to defend the ideas and work contained in the written document orally.

Plagiarism

The LL.M. Paper and Presentation is subject to ULB rules against plagiarism, in particular Section 40, 82 and 83 of the ULB <https://www.ulb.be/fr/documents-officiels/reglement-general-des-etudes>.

Plagiarism includes copying of text, translating of text, using of ideas, copying images or graphs or paraphrasing without attribution whether intentional or unintentional. Plagiarism can be avoided simply by proper citation. Plagiarism will be rigorously sanctioned. Without

prejudice to any other sanctions outlined in the rules or regulations, a 0/20 will be awarded for a LL.M. Paper and Presentation which includes plagiarized materials. The faculty may do periodic checks, including via computerized programs, for plagiarism.

8. GRADING SYSTEM

The Supervisor with the input of the Academic Coordinator grades the LL.M. Paper and Presentation. The grade is based on the written submission and the oral presentation with visual aid.

The LL.M. Paper and Presentation is an integrated written and oral project. Based on performance in these two areas, the LL.M. Paper and Presentation is evaluated on a numerical score with a maximum of 20.

Paper: The LL.M. Paper will be evaluated on the basis of language and structure. The content will be evaluated on the basis of the strength of the argument or advice, thoroughness of the research, originality and clarity. (indicative 40% of grade)

Oral: The oral will be graded on the basis of presentation (verbal and non-verbal), ability to convince, focus on salient points, ability to defend arguments or advice given, ability to respond to questions and to integrate discussion of resources. (indicative 60% of grade)