FAQs

Frequently asked questions about the Professional Diploma in Legal Executive Studies (PDLES)

1. What do Legal Executives do?

   According to the ‘Benchmarks for Legal Executive Courses’ issued by the Law Society of Hong Kong (LSHK) in September 2007, Legal Executives are more than legal support staff. They enjoy a significant professional role in legal firms, business and government. In addition, they enjoy certain ‘Rights of Audience’ (the right to speak in some courts) in accordance with the Court’s Practice Directions.

   Typically, a Legal Executive in a law firm plays a substantial role in the care of clients, the managing of case files and case documentation, engages in legal research and drafting of legal documents (under the supervision of legal professionals), will liaise with courts as well as other professionals and experts. In many cases, Legal Executives will have specialist expertise in one or more areas of the law.

   In Hong Kong, the role of Legal Executives as a highly trained and trusted group of professionals is set to grow as legal education standards are promoted and the provision of legal services in Hong Kong matures and evolves.

2. What if I don’t have 5 passes in HKCEE?

   In September 2008, the Law Society of Hong Kong (LSHK) set minimum admission standards for Legal Executive programmes in Hong Kong. One of the requirements is that you should have 5 passes in HKCEE.

   If you don’t have 5 passes in HKCEE, then you may have:

   (a) ‘Equivalent’ or ‘other’ qualifications which meet the minimum requirement of 5 passes at HKCEE. The LSHK has given further guidance that degrees from tertiary institutions and some GCEs (AS/A Level), Diplomas and Higher Diplomas/ Associate Degrees or similar will meet the minimum entry requirements. You are advised to give full details of your qualifications (including transcripts) in your application to the PDLES programme.

   (b) ‘Law-related’ employment. See the answer to question 3 below.
3. What if I have been in ‘law-related’ employment for less than 3 years?

An alternative way for you to establish ‘eligibility’ for the PDLES is to show that you have been in ‘law-related’ employment for 3 years or more. If you have been in ‘law-related’ employment for less than 3 years, it may be possible for you to accumulate some of this experience while you study.

With regard to establishing ‘law-related’ employment of 3 years or more, the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCS), CUHK and ILEX can offer you a place on the PDLES on the condition that you accumulate a period of ‘law-related’ employment for 3 years or more before August 2012.

4. What if I don’t have a Grade D in English Language (Syllabus B) before the start of the programme?

If you don’t have a grade D in English Language (Syllabus B) (or equivalent), then it is possible for you to take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System – Academic Test) either before you start the programme or during your first year of study.

With regard to establishing ‘language proficiency’ for the PDLES, the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCS), CUHK and ILEX can offer you a place on the PDLES on the condition that you obtain an overall score of 6 in IELTS before August 2012.

5. How much does the PDLES cost per year?

The PDLES costs HK$35,000 per year. This fee includes all teaching materials: tailor-made and annually updated manuals and examination fees. The total fee for this 2-year programme is HK$70,000.

6. After graduating from the 2-year PDLES can I use the title ‘Legal Executive’?

Yes, the 2-year PDLES was one of the first Legal Executive courses accredited by the Law Society of Hong Kong which means that a student who graduates from the programme can use the title ‘Legal Executive’.