

What's New in Summer 2009-10 Session

Tuition Policy Clarifications

It is important that all students understand the requirements to satisfactorily complete the Law Extension Committee (LEC) teaching program in each subject in which they are sitting for an examination. Some important changes, including the introduction of compulsory assignments in 2009, preparation for assignment marks counting towards final assessments likely in 2010, and amendment and clarification of fee exemption procedures applying from 2010, mean that it is necessary to be familiar with the relevant sections of *Course Information Handbook*.

Registration with the LEC

First, you must register with the LEC as well as enrolling with the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB). Sometimes students assume they do not have to do this each semester. That is incorrect, and not registering would in itself be a breach of Rule 60 of the Legal Profession Admission Rules. If you have a Rule 67 or Student Course Application pending with the LPAB, you must still register with the LEC during the LEC registration period: your registration in that case is conditional upon a successful application and enrolment with the LPAB. You must inform the LEC if any change is necessary to your registration as a result of the LPAB decision. Registration with the LEC ensures you have access to the online resources that are a necessary part of the LEC's teaching and learning program, so in practical terms you need to register with the LEC in order to undertake your subjects.

Satisfying LEC Requirements: Eligibility to sit for Examinations

Secondly, you have to satisfy the requirements of the LEC for the subjects you are studying. This is required by Rule 63A of the Legal Profession Admission Rules. The LEC refers to this as "eligibility" and provides a report to the LPAB each session that lists students eligible to sit for the examinations. If you have not enrolled with the LPAB, not registered with the LEC, or have not completed the LEC program satisfactorily, you will not be eligible to sit for that examination.

The introduction of compulsory assignments in all subjects means that all students must be familiar with the criteria used to determine eligibility to sit for an examination. We use three categories: "eligible"; "deemed eligible"; and "not eligible". Please note the eligibility requirements on page 34 of the *Course Information Handbook*. "Deemed

eligible” means you may sit for the examination, but you should weigh up your options carefully.

It is anticipated that from 2010 assignment marks will count towards the examination mark. Marks will not count towards your final assessment mark for this session. Marks will be awarded, however, according to the policies that will be used when they do count. Significantly, assignments that are submitted late and in contravention of the late submission requirements will be penalised. This could affect eligibility. You should read carefully the assignment policy outlined from page 32 of *Course Information Handbook*.

Fees: Changes to Exemption Provisions

There are some occasions when a student may be thoroughly prepared and eligible to sit for an examination, but is unable to do so. In the past there has been an application process to the LPAB, which has been given the shorthand term “exemption from tuition”. There has been widespread confusion about exemptions and the criteria required. Also, in the majority of instances, applications have not been successful. From the March Examinations 2010 the policy relating to exemptions will be amended and clarified.

Because the LPAB examinations are held twice a year, and because of the costs involved, it is not feasible for the LPAB to hold supplementary examinations. In exceptional circumstances the LPAB and the Law Extension Committee may be able to offer some financial relief to a student who, but for an unforeseen event, would have most likely passed the examination. Please note the following changes for 2010, which are contained in the Summer 2009-2010 Session *Course Information Handbook*. (The relevant policies for students who sat for the September 2009 examinations are outlined in the Winter 2009 Session *Course Information Handbook*.)

In order to be considered for a fee concession, a student must have been prevented from sitting for the examination by serious illness or misadventure occurring within one week of the examination. A statutory declaration and specific medical certificate must be lodged with the Law Extension Committee, if possible prior to the examination but no later than 14 days after the examination. Upon the student passing that examination in the next session, and notifying the Law Extension Committee, the Law Extension Committee and the LPAB will consider a partial refund of the fees for that session.

The criteria are quite strict – for example, a student must have been eligible (not deemed eligible) to sit for the examination they missed and in the session immediately following they must have achieved a pass in the compulsory assignment and the

examination. It is advisable to discuss an application with the Law Extension Committee or the LPAB's Legal Officer.

The aims of these changes are to maintain a compassionate ground for fee relief; to reduce ambiguity with regard to the tuition and application rules; and in general to introduce more accuracy, certainty and efficiency into the process.

Code of Conduct

The *Course Information Handbook* has for some years included a section "Conduct, Character and the Study of Law". That will continue, but last session a draft Code of Conduct was distributed to students and posted on the Webcampus. Principles of behavior appropriate to the environments in which our program is offered are now gathered into one foundation document, which is on the Webcampus, with amendments. All involved with the LEC program are required to become familiar with, and abide by, the Code. It will be updated and amended as necessary, and suggestions are welcome.

Conclusion

The rules you have to comply with are not designed to hinder you. They are intended to maintain the integrity and fairness of the course. Over time we receive many anxious calls. The frustrating ones are the ones that come too late for us to be able to help. It is essential that you know the rules and regulations that apply to your course. It is essential that you plan your program in advance and manage your time. Don't leave study and assignment submission to the last minute. If you encounter an obstacle, let us know at once.

The LEC wishes you well in your studies.