1. **Title of the module**

LAWS5890 (LW589): The Skills of Argument – How to Argue and Win

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

Kent Law School

1. **The level of the module (e.g. Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 6

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

15 credits (7.5 ECTS Credits)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Autumn or Spring

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

All social sciences undergraduate Law programmes.

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module, students will be able to:**
   1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the historical, sociological and political contexts for the use of argument and arguing.
   2. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the concepts and principles at issue in contemporary approaches to argument, including the use of deductive and inductive reasoning, analogy, coherence and cogency, the use of authority, and modes and devices of rhetoric and persuasion.
   3. Identify argument and distinguish it from other modes of interaction.
   4. Analyse critically both simple and complex arguments.
   5. Rank arguments in relation to weakness and strength in relation to a range of formal and critical criteria.
   6. Present sustained and persuasive argument in writing.
   7. Present sound argument with persuasive force.
   8. Present weak argument with persuasive force.
   9. Argue persuasively within given social, cultural or institutional parameters.
   10. Engage in reasoned and informed discussion on the major themes treated on the module.
2. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module, students will be able to:**
   1. Apply critical, analytical and problem-solving skills in a wide range of different legal and non-legal settings.
   2. Research an issue to find relevant principles and concepts, and to investigate those principles and concepts critically and analytically
   3. Identify flaws and weaknesses in argument
   4. Distinguish and rank simple and complex arguments according to weakness and strength
   5. Use library and web resources, including journal articles, to research an issue
   6. Present a sustained critical analysis of argument, including legal argument, in writing
3. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

The curriculum is in three parts:

(1) A historical, sociological and political contextualisation of argument and arguing. The aims of argument will be investigated through these perspectives, enabling students to develop a critical approach to argument, and supplementing the skills of argument by raising students’ awareness of the premises and assumptions within which argument takes place. The distinction of argument from other modes of interaction and expression will be considered by relation to these contexts.

(2) The second part of the module treats argument and arguing formally, both by mapping the standard forms of argument, and by showing formally how to pick out a bad argument from a good one. This part of the module thus investigates deductive and inductive reasoning, argument by analogy, and the use of supportive evidence and the structure of justification, and attends carefully to the set of formal fallacies in argumentation. These topics are illustrated throughout by attention to real examples from law and elsewhere, with attention given to how formal argument is constructed and to the skills required to identify formal fallacies. This knowledge base is used by students to develop their own skills of formal argument and their ability to critique the argument of others.

(3) The third part of the module turns to the skills of rhetoric and persuasion, including examination of the ploys and devices that are often used to give bad or weak arguments persuasive force. Attention will be given to aspects of coherence and cogency arising from studies in linguistics and the philosophy of language, and a particular focus will be given to arguments drawing on authority, using law in illustration. Again, students will be expected to develop their own skills in these regards, using rhetoric and other devices both to support good argument and to lend weak argument greater persuasive force.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

* Audi R., *The Structure of Justification* (CUP, 1993)
* Bickenbach J.E and Davies J., *Good Reasons for Better Arguments* (Broadview, 1997)
* Copi I.M. and Cohen C., *Introduction to Logic* (13th, Prentice Hall, 2008)
* Goodrich P., *Legal Discourse Studies in Linguistics, Rhetoric and Legal Analysis* (2nd, Pallgrave, 1990)
* Grayling A.C., *The Art of Always Being Right – Thirty-eight Ways to Win when You Are Defeated* (Gibson Square, 2005)
* Mills S., *Discourse* (2nd, Routledge, 2003)

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total study hours: 150

Contact hours: 20

Private study hours: 130

1. **Assessment methods.**

13.1 Main assessment methods

The module will be assessed by 2-hour examination (100%).

**Students must achieve a mark of 40% in the exam in order to pass this module.**

13.2 Reassessment methods

Reassessment Instrument: 100% exam

**Students must achieve a mark of 40% in the exam in order to pass this module on reassessment.**

1. ***Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section 12) and methods of assessment (section 13)***

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| **Module learning outcome** | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 8.6 | 8.7 | 8.8 | 8.9 | 8.10 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.5 | 9.6 |
| **Learning / teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lectures | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Seminars | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Private Study |  |  | X | X | X |  |  |  |  |  | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exam (100%) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

1. The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

**a) Accessible resources and curriculum**

1. Preference will be given to electronic resources that meet minimum accessibility standards and support the use of assistive technologies.
2. Module outlines will be made accessible at least four weeks before the module starts.
3. Prioritised reading lists will be made available sufficiently in advance to accommodate the provision of alternative formats and support those with a slow reading speed.
4. Lecture/seminar slides/outlines will be made available in electronic format in advance to allow all students to prepare (particularly students with notetaking difficulties).
5. In accordance with the KLS school-level statement on Lecture Capture, lectures will be recorded to assist notetaking unless one or more of the lectures contains sensitive material. The module convenor will notify students in advance of any lectures that will not be recorded.

**b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

The inclusive practices in the guidance (Annex B Appendix A, section b(1) and (2)) have all been considered in order to support all students in their assessments on this module.

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered:**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

There will be some domestic and international historical, sociological and political contextualisation of argument and arguing. However, the primary purpose of this module is to introduce students to the nature of argument and the practical skills required to argue successfully.

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

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| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of the delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6 & 7 cover sheet) |
| 21/09/2017 | Minor | September 2018 | 12-13, 17 | No |
| 02/12/19 | Minor | September 2020 | 13 | No |