1. **Title of the module**

(LAWS6580 / LW658): Technologies in Legal Practice

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 undergraduate single and joint honours law programs. Available as an elective module.

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module, students will be able to:**
   1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the fundamental status and role of technology in early modern, modern and contemporary legal practice in the UK;
   2. Display a detailed awareness of contemporary digital technology and media, machine learning, artificial intelligence and other technologies that are emerging in the practice of law in the UK;
   3. Demonstrate a detailed understanding of how key elements of contemporary technologies in legal practice differ qualitatively from previous technologies;
   4. Critically reflect on the way legal technologies relate to broader paradigms of law and normativity;
   5. Critically discuss the main contemporary intellectual debates regarding the significance and impact of digital technologies and machine learning, including in relation to law and the legal system
2. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module, students will be able to:** 
   1. Demonstrate a range of analytical skills including close reading of a variety of materials;
   2. Situate texts within the context in which they were produced and are received;
   3. Effectively and independently apply knowledge to analyse complex issues;
   4. Write cogently about themes and structures as they appear in selected texts;
   5. Formulate and sustain a complex argument, supported by appropriate evidence.
3. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

From the introduction of writing in criminal trial processes, right through to use of AI to machine-analyse legal documents, the law has always transformed its own practice through the adoption of “non-legal” technologies. Today, blockchain and other distributed ledger technologies have made possible the creation of new kinds of legal documents—for example, “smart contracts” that are self-executing and self-enforcing. Hand-held mobile devices and instant messaging have transformed lawyer-client relations. Beyond new documents or networked communication mechanisms, however, new technologies like algorithmic machine learning are changing the way lawyers, courts and intermediaries do their work. Tomorrow’s lawyers, as recent scholarship has argued, will need a new set of skills and ways of working that are fit for the coming age of human-machine hybridity. This module aims to introduce students to some of the major technologies currently being integrated into legal practice, as well as the ways that they are transforming the way law works—and possibly, according to legal scholars, what we mean by “law” itself. By critically situating these new technologies in relation to previous technological (r)evolutions in legal practice—major changes precipitated by technologies like writing, the invention of forms, or the media technology of legal files—this module asks what implications those technologies might have for the lawyer, the court, and for other governmental institutions whose work has traditionally been defined by the pursuit of justice.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**
   * Brownsword, R. and Yeung, K. (eds) *Regulating Technologies: Legal Futures, Regulatory Frames and Technological Fixes* (Bloomsbury,2008)
   * Goldenfein, J. and Leiter, A. “Legal Engineering on the Blockchain: ‘Smart Contracts’ as Legal Conduct” [2018] *Law and Critique* 29(2), 141-149.
   * Hacker, P. *et al*, eds. *Regulating Blockchain: Techno-social and Legal Challenges*. (Oxford University Press, 2019).
   * Hildebrandt, M. *Smart Technologies and the End(s) of Law: Novel Entanglements of Law and Technology* (Edward Elgar, 2015).
   * Parsley, C. “An Office for Technological Times? Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Juristic Thinking” in Goodrich P and McVeigh S (eds) (2020, forthcoming)
   * Susskind, R. *Tomorrow’s Lawyers*: *An Introduction to Your Future* (Oxford University Press, 2017)
   * Vismann, C. *Files: Law and Media Technology* (Stanford University Press, 2008).
2. **Learning and teaching methods**

Contact Hours: 20

Private Study Hours: 130

Total Study Hours: 150

1. **Assessment methods.**

13.1 Main assessment methods

In-course test (45 mins) – 10%

Essay (3,500 words) – 90%

13.2 Reassessment methods

Re-assessment Instrument - 100% coursework

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 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.5 |
| **Learning / teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminars | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |  | X |
| Private Study | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| In-course test (10%) | X |  |  | X |  | X | X | X | X |  |
| Essay (90%) | 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 KLS policy on lecture capture, the seminars will not be recorded as they are heavily discussion-based and may contain sensitive material (individual sessions may be recorded at the discretion of the convenor).

**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**

This module is concerned with international content, namely globally-relevant emergent technologies being used in legal practice. Although the focus will be on the UK legal system, parallels will regularly be drawn to other jurisdictions. Due to the nature of these technologies, they often involve transnational legal and governance issues which will be highlighted in the module learning.

**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) |
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