

Media Release

**Innovative Master of Laws to train legal talents in cross-border commercial law**

***Singapore Management University and Queen Mary University of London announce partnership in new Dual LLM in Commercial Law Programme***

*Singapore, 7 October 2015 (Thursday)* – With the high level of interconnectivity of today’s world, and the exponential growth of global trade and commerce, there is an increased expectation on lawyers to provide legal advice on transnational deals and perspectives on domestic laws and legal systems, as well as to engage with cross-border commercial dispute resolution. With a view towards educating legal talents who are well-versed in both Eastern and Western legal systems, who understand both the law and local business culture, and who are able to offer a highly nuanced service to their multi-national clients, the Singapore Management University (SMU) and Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) have announced an innovative Dual Master of Laws (LLM) in Commercial Law (Singapore and London) programme, which both universities will jointly offer from July 2016.

Officiating the partnership in London on 2 October 2015 were Professor Yeo Tiong Min, Dean of SMU School of Law (SOL) and Professor Spyros Maniatis, Head of the Centre for Commercial Law Studies (CCLS), QMUL. CCLS specialises in the knowledge and skills in commercial law that can be placed at the service of the UK government, public bodies, overseas institutions, the legal profession, industry and commerce. Through their specialist schools and institutes, they continue to maintain their lead as one of the top commercial postgraduate law schools in the world.

The 15-month programme, which will be jointly delivered by SMU and QMUL, will offer students the unique opportunity to study commercial law in two of the world’s major business and financial centres – Singapore and London. Students will first spend six months in Singapore where they will develop a broad overview of Asian commercial law. In particular, the Singapore leg is designed to expose students to a broad range of legal issues which businesses in Asia are likely to encounter. Thereafter, the programme will take them to QMUL’s campus in Holborn, the heart of London’s legal district, where they will take a series of specialised modules taught by leading commercial law experts.

Another unique feature of the programme is the high level of integration that will significantly benefit students. They will stay connected with both universities throughout the 15 months, and instructors from both universities will be available to them, regardless of which campus they are in.

The specially-designed curriculum features a major focus on international and comparative issues, and on the importance of legal principles, rules and laws underlying business and commercial relationships. By the end of the programme, students will be equipped with a thorough understanding of key aspects of commercial law from multiple perspectives, enabling them to develop an in-depth understanding of different regions’ approaches to resolving commercial problems. The varied knowledge-base, coupled with the specialist expertise, will make them very attractive to potential employers, particularly multi-national firms.

**Professor Yeo Tiong Min** said, “We are proud to be the Asian partner of the CCLS at QMUL in the delivery of high quality postgraduate legal education. The dual LLM programme that we are jointly offering has been specially curated to take advantage of the respective commercial law expertise of the faculty at both institutions. We believe that the opportunity to study in London and Singapore, both hubs for transnational businesses, will be attractive to candidates who are keen to learn more about legal issues affecting cross-border commercial transactions.” Professor Yeo is also Singapore’s first Honorary Senior Counsel and the Yong Pung How Professor of Law at SOL.

**Professor Spyros Maniatis** said, “I am delighted that SMU and QMUL are offering this innovative programme allowing students to immerse seamlessly into diverse legal and business cultures, looking at East and West from an international and comparative perspective. Students will be part of an eclectic and dynamic group of students taught by top commercial law academics and practitioners, as part of a unique learning experience that draws on the strengths of both universities.”

Applications for the inaugural intake of the new course will open in late October 2015; the Universities expect to welcome about 40 students in the first intake which begins in July 2016.

To date, SMU SOL has established partnerships with 43 universities internationally. SMU is also the first Asian university to have joined the ranks of top European law schools as part of the [THEMIS network](#), alongside Università Bocconi (Milan, Italy), Esade (Barcelona, Spain), Freie Universität (Berlin, Germany), Université Paris Est Créteil Val de Marne (Paris, France) and Maastricht Law School (Maastricht, The Netherlands). THEMIS represents a network of six institutions which have come together to create a new standard in business law in response to an increasing demand for law professionals with international know-how and expertise.

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#### Enclosures

1. More details on the Dual LLM: <http://www.law.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/singapore/index.html>
2. Photos of signing ceremony
  - Caption for photos 1 - 3: (L-R) Professor Spyros Maniatis, Head of the Centre for Commercial Law Studies, Queen Mary University of London; and Professor Yeo Tiong Min, Dean of Singapore Management University School of Law officiating the partnership in London on 2 October 2015.
  - Pictures to be credited to © Jorge Duarte Estevao [www.jdestevao.com](http://www.jdestevao.com)
  - High-res photos here: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/clmrqu0ja08clib/AAAdYqBtFjuXiWSZ1WhMC1\\_xa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/clmrqu0ja08clib/AAAdYqBtFjuXiWSZ1WhMC1_xa?dl=0)

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



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## **About Singapore Management University**

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 8,800 undergraduate, postgraduate, executive and professional, full- and part-time students, SMU is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)

## **About SMU School of Law**

SMU School of Law proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007. Taught by a dynamic faculty with postgraduate degrees from renowned universities such as Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and London, the School aims to nurture its students to become excellent lawyers who will contribute significantly to society. Trained with the ability to contextualise legal expertise and to think across disciplines and geographical borders coupled with SMU's interactive pedagogy, SMU's law graduates are confident articulate and analytically agile.

The SMU School of Law offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Information Systems or Social Sciences, and a Master of Laws programme. The School has also launched a full-time graduate programme, the Juris Doctor Programme which can be completed within three years, and in some cases, accelerated for completion within two years. [www.law.smu.edu.sg](http://www.law.smu.edu.sg)

## **About Queen Mary University of London**

Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) is one of the UK's leading universities, and one of the largest institutions in the University of London, with 20,260 students from more than 150 countries. A member of the Russell Group, we work across the humanities and social sciences, medicine and dentistry, and science and engineering, with inspirational teaching directly informed by our research - in the most recent national assessment of the quality of research, we were placed ninth in the UK (REF 2014).

We also offer something no other university can: a stunning self-contained residential campus in London's East End. As well as our home at Mile End, we have campuses at Whitechapel, Charterhouse Square and West Smithfield dedicated to the study of medicine, and a base for legal studies at Lincoln's Inn Fields.

We have a rich history in London with roots in Europe's first public hospital, St Barts; England's first medical school, The London; one of the first colleges to provide higher education to women, Westfield College; and the Victorian philanthropic project, the People's Palace at Mile End. Today, as well as retaining these close connections to our local community, we are known for our international activities, and have research and teaching partnerships with leading universities around the world. This includes two very successful and long-standing joint partnerships with the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, and Nanchang University. QMUL has an annual turnover of £350m, a research income worth £100m, and generates employment and output worth £700m to the UK economy each year.

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