

The Dean of the Faculty, Professor Juan José Hinojosa , and Professors Miguel Angel Asensio Sánchez and Bruno Rodríguez Rosado, directors of the English Law Studies course, are proud to announce that the University of Malaga's *English Law Studies (ELS) Course (Curso de Extensión Universitaria de Derecho Inglés)* has met the required standards for the award of the Institute of Paralegal's "Diploma in English Law Studies (D.ELS) to students who successfully complete Level 4 of the ELS course. The ELS course has been operating in Malaga since 2010 and the University of Malaga is the first University to receive such approval.

The D.ELS project was conceived as a joint initiative of the Faculty of Law in Malaga with the Institute of Paralegals (IoP). Discussions began in June 2015 between John Brebner, Senior Lecturer and Head of Studies of the course, and David Holland (Chief Executive) and James O'Connell (Head of Policy) of the IoP. There was a shared perception that a changing global scenario would generate a demand for a new breed of 'global lawyer'. 'Brexit' was already 'in the air' and, with it or without it, lawyers throughout Europe and beyond would soon be facing new challenges. The Faculty of Law in Malaga and the IoP in London were well placed to pioneer such a project.

The starting point was to agree on what was meant by a 'global lawyer'. The definition became: *"a lawyer who has professional language skills and is qualified and experienced in the interaction of the two major systems of law that operate across the globe; 'Civil Law' and 'Common Law'"*. We adopted a short-hand definition of this new lawyer: A Dual-Trained Lawyer' or 'Global Lawyer'. We then considered the nature and quality of the 'dual-training' qualifications and experience that the international market would be expecting from such lawyers. Work began on designing a route towards appropriate academic and professional qualification via the award of a Diploma in English Law Studies (D.ELS), the first step, and the recognition of the professional status of Approved English Law Adviser (A.ELA) and the grant of a professional practising certificate as the second step (see below).

In June 2016, Rita Leat took over as the new Chief Executive of the IoP. Far from flinching from the task, she embraced the project and introduced energy, vision and improvements to it. With Brexit by now a certainty and the 'transfer' of European lawyers under the EC Directive no longer a practical option, dual-training approval by the IoP was not only going to respond to the challenges of globalisation but also to provide the only means for lawyers across the continent of Europe to obtain academic and professional accreditation in the UK and to facilitate recognition of their English Law qualifications in other Common Law jurisdictions.

For the moment, the D.ELS is awarded only to students who have successfully completed the University of Malaga's 4-year IoP approved English Law Study (ELS) programme. In the future, we expect it will be awarded to students who have successfully completed equivalent courses provided by IoP approved universities or higher education bodies across Europe.

On 31 March 2017, at a quiet ceremony during the Faculty's 2017 Law Fair, Rita Leat presented the Dean of the Faculty, Juan José Hinojosa, with the IoP's Certificate of Approval that the University of Malaga had met the required standards for the award of the D.ELS. This was a historic and memorable moment. Rita was then gracious enough to personally congratulate

the first 24 students who had successfully completed Level 4 of the ELS course and to present them with their hard-earned diplomas. A number of these students are currently moving on to become the first lawyers to achieve full A.ELA status in 2018.

The precise route from D.ELS to A.ELA and the conditions of issue and renewal of a professional paralegal practising certificate (PPC) is currently under discussion and the IoP will be making a document available soon.

For further information regarding D.ELS or A.ELA, you may contact John Brebner directly on englishlaw@uma.es or call him on 0034 659 09 77 21.



The Dean of the Faculty of Law at Malaga University, Juan José Hinojosa, receiving the IoP's Certificate of Approval of the English Law Studies Course from Rita Leat, Chief Executive of the Institute of Paralegals.



Miguel Angel Asensio and Bruno Rodriguez, of the Faculty of Law at Malaga University, Directors of the English Law Studies Course (ELS) (left and right), together with John Brebner (centre) Senior Lecturer and Head of Studies of the English Law Studies Course.