PROSPECTUS

International Mental Health Law, Policy & Rights-Based Services

(Certificate Course & Postgraduate Diploma)

2026–2027

REVISED FORMAT

2 Learning Pathways

Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy, ILS, Pune

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1. About the programme

The International Mental Health Law, Policy & Rights-Based Services programme, launched in 2008 by the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy, Indian Law Society, Pune, equips professionals to influence mental health law, policy, research, and practice across diverse contexts. Formerly known as the International Diploma in Mental Health, Human Rights & Law, the programme has built a global community of 172 graduates from 67 countries across 17 cohorts.

Grounded in the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), this programme explores their application to mental health legislation, policy, services, and practice. Centred on the values of social justice, inclusion, and systemic transformation, the programme is designed to equip participants to drive meaningful social change for people with psychosocial disabilities across diverse contexts.

This year, we are introducing a new learning format—in addition to the Postgraduate Diploma, the programme is now also offered as a Certificate Course, providing two distinct learning pathways to suit differing needs.



Indian Law Society

The Indian Law Society is a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, and the Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950. The Society was established in 1923 by renowned personalities in the field of law. Its objective is to impart professionally relevant and socially responsive legal education on a scientific basis.

The Indian Law Society considers legal education to be a liberal education and emphasises the professional aspects of legal education. The Society is committed to imparting education that upholds the enduring principles of justice, liberty, and equality.

The mission of the Society is to prepare socially responsible lawyers who uphold the values of the rule of law and democratic principles. To fulfil its commitment to this mission and its aims, the Indian Law Society established Law College, Poona, now known as 'ILS Law College, Pune', in 1924.

The Society also established the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS), a research institute that supports the Society in fulfilling its mission. IALS promotes research in law and legal awareness among the public to strengthen a legal culture that supports the rule of law.

Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy

Founded in 2007, the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy (CMHLP) is based in Pune at the Indian Law Society (ILS). ILS, our parent body, is a not-for-profit that was established as a charitable society in 1923.

Our mission is to strengthen and transform the mental health of our communities to be holistic and responsive in addressing individual and collective well-being.

We facilitate pathways that enable people to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. To apply a rights-based approach, we collaborate with stakeholders from multiple disciplines including policymakers, mental health professionals, researchers, civil society organisations, persons with lived experience and the media.

We work nationally & internationally, with a specific focus on vulnerable & marginalised populations across low- and middle-income settings.

2. Programme Structure: Two Learning Pathways

To make the programme accessible to a wider audience, the **International Mental Health Law, Policy & Rights-Based Services programme** has been reimagined this year to offer two distinct learning pathways: a standalone Certificate Course and a Postgraduate Diploma. Grounded in the UNCRPD, both pathways provide a rights-based understanding of mental health law, policy, and services, with the Postgraduate Diploma offering advanced study and practical application.



PATHWAY 1

Certificate Course

A standalone foundational programme for professionals, including people with lived experience and caregivers, to introduce rights-based approaches to mental health through a 12-week series of online lectures led by global experts.



PATHWAY 2

Postgraduate Diploma

An advanced programme for professionals, including people with lived experience and caregivers, seeking in-depth knowledge and practical skills in mental health law, policy, and rights-based services. Building on the 12-week online lectures, professionals enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma will participate in an in-person residential session and further develop their practical skills through peer-learning, assign-ments, a final project, and mentorship from experts.

Which pathway is right for you?

CERTIFICATE COURSE	POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
• Online	• Online + Residential
• Foundation level	• Advanced level, building on the Certificate Course
• 12-week course	• Year-long programme
• Certificate awarded	• Postgraduate Diploma awarded

Thematic Areas

Foundations of Mental Health and Law

- Key issues in mental health
- Gaps in mental health treatment and access to care
- Key legal concepts and systems relevant to mental health

Human Rights and Mental Health

- International human rights frameworks, including the UNCRPD
- Key rights-based concepts including legal capacity, consent to treatment, autonomy and coercion

Policy and Planning

- Mental health policies, legislation, and legal frameworks
- Mental health systems and service organisation
- Tools to develop, reform, implement, and advocate for rights-based mental health policies and systems

Rights-based Services

- Rights-based service delivery
- Deinstitutionalisation and community-based mental health services
- Inclusion, independence, and guardianship

Specialised Areas

- Mental health of children and young people (including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)
- Gender and sexuality
- Humanitarian emergencies
- Mental health and criminal justice

3. Certificate Course

A 12-week online Certificate Course comprising weekly lectures, quizzes, and reading materials.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Certificate Course, participants will develop the ability to:

- Grasp the foundational concepts in mental health, human rights, law, policy, and rights-based services
- Understand how the UNCRPD and other international instruments apply to people with psychosocial disabilities
- Understand how to apply rights-based approaches in their own work on mental health

Eligibility

The Certificate Course is designed for early- and mid-career professionals and/or people with lived experience seeking a foundational understanding of mental health law, policy, human rights, and rights-based services.

Fees*

Indian Residents	INR 28,500
Lower-Middle Income Country (LMIC) Residents	USD 300
Upper-Middle Income Country (UMIC) Residents	USD 600
High-Income Country (HIC) Residents	USD 1,000

* Fees exclusive of 18% Goods & Services Tax. The fee includes access to online sessions, the online learning platform, and course materials. Country income classifications are based on the World Bank's current income classification. Please check the income status of your country before paying the fee. The tuition fee must be paid within fifteen days of confirmation of admission.

* The fee may be refunded only if the admission is cancelled within thirty days of the confirmation of admission. Ten percent of the fee amount will be deducted from the refund as administrative expenses. For payments outside of India, the refund amount will be calculated in INR and then converted into USD at the prevailing market rate.

4. Postgraduate Diploma

The Postgraduate Diploma builds on the Certificate curriculum and includes advanced coursework, supervision, assessments, and a residential programme in Pune, India.

Learning Outcomes

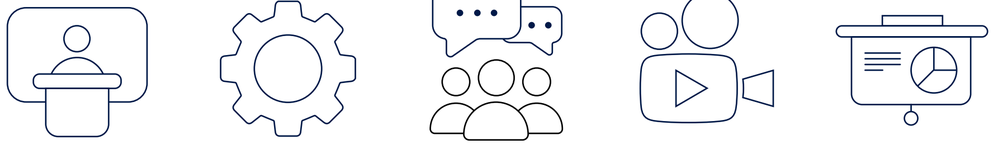
In addition to the learning outcomes of the Certificate Course, participants completing the Postgraduate Diploma will develop the ability to:

- Critically engage with and appreciate the central role of the international human rights framework and how it relates to people with psychosocial disabilities
- Draft, adopt, and enact mental health legislation, policy, and services
- Monitor the implementation of mental health legislation, policy, and services
- Advocate for the protection and promotion of the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities

Course Structure

Online Lectures	12-week series of expert lectures and quizzes (Certificate Course)
Residential Session	In-depth lectures, case discussions, and applied learning in Pune, India
Self-study Phase	Graded monthly assignments and reading materials
Final Project	Project proposal or critical essay under faculty supervision
Advocacy Workshop	Online workshop on rights-based advocacy

Teaching Methods



LECTURES | WORKSHOPS | GROUP DISCUSSIONS | SCREENING OF DOCUMENTARIES | PRESENTATIONS

The Diploma uses a wide variety of teaching methods that include in-person lectures, workshops, small group discussions, learning through documentaries and presentations during the residential sessions.

During the self-study period, participants will have access to the open-source learning platform, Moodle. This space allows for students to easily access all course modules and complete the quizzes and other online assignments. They may also reach out to the course faculty on email for queries regarding the course content/project discussion.

Assessment

Students will be assessed and awarded a certificate, mark sheet, and academic transcript based on the following criteria:

- Online Assignments
- Project Submission
- Viva Voce

Fees*

Indian Residents	INR 1,42,500
Lower-Middle Income Country (LMIC) Residents	USD 1,500
Upper-Middle Income Country (UMIC) Residents	USD 3,000
High-Income Country (HIC) Residents	USD 5,000

* Fees exclusive of 18% Goods & Services Tax. The fee includes access to all online sessions, learning platform, course materials, assessment of assignments, and final project supervision and mentorship. Course fee also includes accommodation and daily breakfast, as well as lunch on all teaching days during the residential session in Pune, India.

* Country income classifications are based on the World Bank's current income classification. Please check the income status of your country before paying the fee.

* The tuition fee must be paid within fifteen days of confirmation of admission. The fee may be refunded only if the admission is cancelled within thirty days of the confirmation of admission. Ten percent of the fee amount will be deducted from the refund as administrative expenses. The refund amount will be calculated in INR and then converted into USD at the prevailing market rate.

Timeline

DATE	ACTIVITY	APPLIES TO
3 August 2026	Applications open	Certificate Course and Postgraduate Diploma
30 September 2026	Applications close	Certificate Course and Postgraduate Diploma
30 October 2026 –11 February 2027	Expert lectures held online every Friday from 6:00–8:00 PM IST (a 3-week gap in December)	Certificate Course and Postgraduate Diploma
26 February –6 March 2027	Eight-day residential programme at the Indian Law Society, Pune	Postgraduate Diploma only
April–September 2027	Monthly assignments and final project development	Postgraduate Diploma only
October 2027	Online viva voce examination	Postgraduate Diploma only

Faculty

The programme (Certificate Course and Postgraduate Diploma) is delivered by an interdisciplinary group of experts in mental health, law, human rights, policy, and rights-based services.

Abhijit Nadkarni



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL

Arjun Kapoor



CO-DIRECTOR AND SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW & POLICY, ILS

Charlene Sunkel



FOUNDER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AVES MENTAL HEALTH

Fahmy Hanna



TECHNICAL OFFICER DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE WHO GENEVA. CO-CHAIR IASC MHPSS REFERENCE GROUP FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT IN EMERGENCIES

Itzhak Levav



IN MEMORIAM

Dovilė Juodkaitė



ELECTED MEMBER FOR COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD) (2027-2030)

Jana Offergeld



SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR, GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Jasmine Kalha



CO-DIRECTOR AND SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW & POLICY, ILS

Kaustubh Joag



CO-DIRECTOR AND SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW & POLICY, ILS

Ketki Ranade



ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, MUMBAI CAMPUS

Maitreyi Misra



DIRECTOR, DEATH PENALTY MITIGATION; DIRECTOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Melvyn Freeman



CONSULTANT, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION; VISITING PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

Oliver Lewis



BARRISTER AT DOUGHTY STREET CHAMBERS, UK

Soumitra Pathare



DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW & POLICY, ILS

Steven Allen



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VALIDITY FOUNDATION

Vaijayanti Joshi



HON SECRETARY, INDIAN LAW SOCIETY; DIRECTOR (ACADEMICS), ILS LAW COLLEGE

4. Residential Sessions (for Postgraduate Diploma Students)



About Pune

Pune, previously known as Poona, is one of the most important industrial and educational hubs of India. The city boasts several world-class educational institutions and is therefore widely regarded as ‘Oxford of the East’. It is a multicultural city with students from all over the country and abroad. Pune has a large student population and is home to over 14,000 international students from 99 countries. It is also the cultural capital of Maharashtra.

Pune is a nature lover’s paradise since it is surrounded by several hills and lakes. Once referred to as a ‘pensioner’s paradise’, it is now home to many software and Information Technology companies. The local language is Marathi, but the cosmopolitan nature of the city means that people generally speak many languages, including English and Hindi.

Accessibility

Pune is located in the western Indian state of Maharashtra and is the ninth-largest urban agglomeration in India, with an estimated population of 7.8 million. It is situated just 100 miles (160 km) from Mumbai and is nestled at an altitude of 560 meters above sea level, which provides fine and pleasant weather throughout the year.

Pune is well-connected by road, rail, and air to major cities in India such as Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Delhi, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Indore, and Chennai. Furthermore, Pune Airport has become an international hub with flights connecting to Singapore, Frankfurt, and Dubai.

Environment

Pune experiences three distinct seasons: summer, monsoon, and winter.

As February marks the transition from winter to summer in Pune, the city experiences pleasant and comfortable weather. Daytime temperatures usually range between 28–32°C, while nighttime temperatures can dip to around 15–20°C. The climate is dry with clear skies, making it an ideal time for travel and outdoor sessions.

Due to its high altitude, nights in Pune are significantly cooler compared to most other parts of this region.

Travel and accommodation

There are limited international flights to Pune, primarily from Singapore, Dubai, and Frankfurt. Therefore, we recommend that you fly to Mumbai (which is approximately 160 km from Pune) or Delhi, both of which are well-connected with international flights from numerous destinations. From Mumbai or Delhi, you can take a domestic flight to Pune (a 30-minute and 2-hour flight, respectively).

Alternatively, land transportation from Mumbai airport to Pune is reasonably frequent and of good quality. It may help reduce your travel and transportation costs.

ILS usually negotiates preferential rates with a few hotels and service apartment providers located near the campus. Once your admission for the course is confirmed, the course coordinators can provide you with this information. As the residential sessions are held on-campus, accommodation will be covered by your course fees.

Apply here

Applications are reviewed holistically, taking into account the applicant's educational and professional background, statement of purpose, and interest in advancing rights-based mental health law, policy, services, and advocacy.

We particularly welcome applicants who demonstrate a commitment to promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities within their own contexts and who are motivated to apply their learning to drive meaningful change.

To learn more about the International Mental Health Law, Policy & Rights-Based Services programme, please visit our website. If you have any queries, please write to us at **learn@cmhlp.org.**

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CMH Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy

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