CONFERENCE HANDOUT

CLEA 1st ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEGAL EDUCATION, 2026

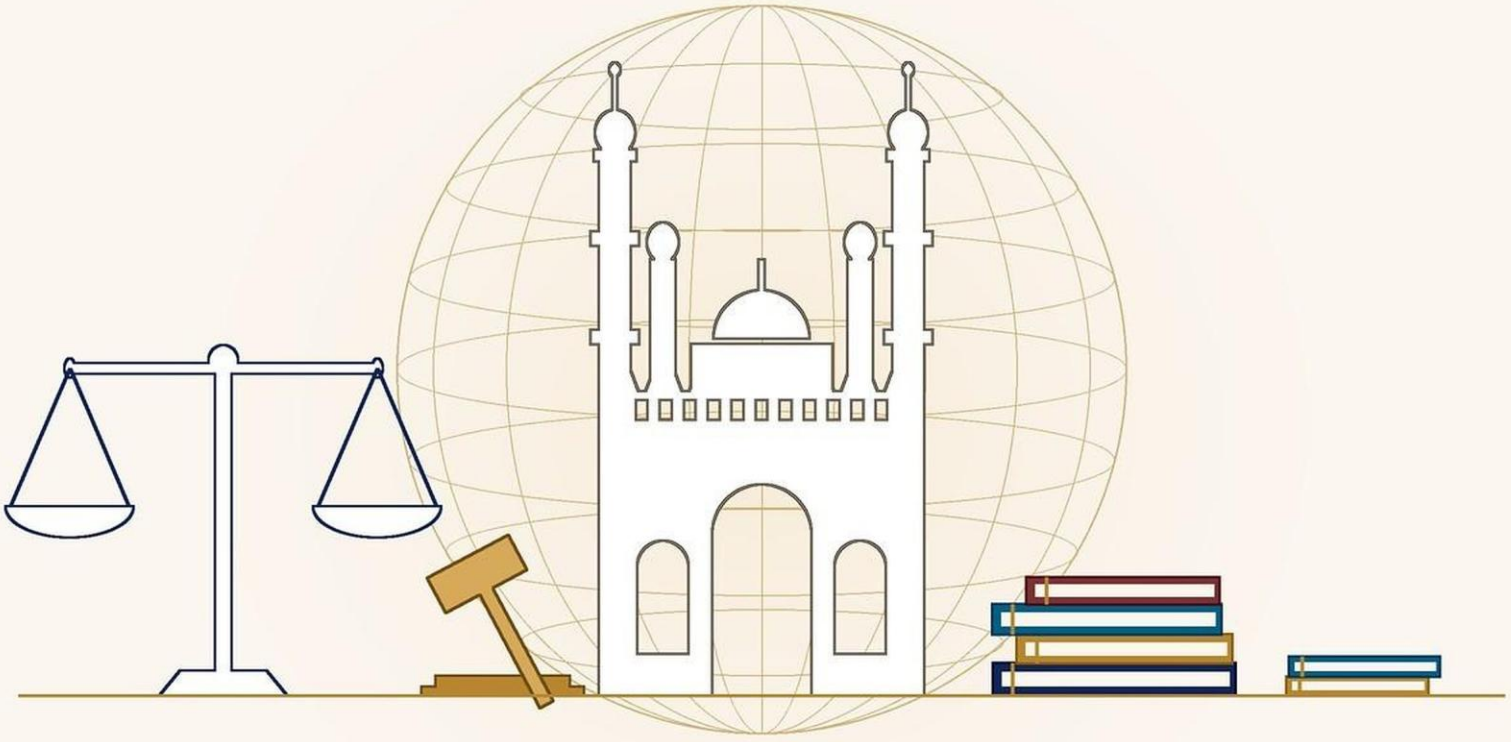
GLOBALISING LEGAL EDUCATION

Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition

"Tradition in Thought. Transformation in Learning."

21st & 22nd November, 2026

Novotel Hyderabad Airport, Telangana



ORGANISED BY

Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)

www.clea.ac

About Commonwealth Legal Education Association

Founded in December 1971, the **Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)** is a Commonwealth-wide organisation dedicated to fostering and promoting high standards of legal education across the Commonwealth. CLEA provides a platform for collaboration, academic exchange and the advancement of legal education across diverse jurisdictions. It seeks to make legal education socially relevant, professionally useful and responsive to the evolving needs of the legal profession and society. Its work encompasses the development of law curricula and innovative teaching methodologies, strengthening law schools to address emerging professional and global challenges, and promoting continuing legal education and distance-learning programmes.

Over more than five decades, CLEA has pursued its objectives through a diverse range of academic and professional initiatives. These include international and regional conferences, seminars, research projects, publications, curriculum development and professional exchange. The Association also conducts the Commonwealth Law Lecture Series, providing a forum for distinguished judges and legal academics to engage with significant developments in law and legal education.

CLEA has also expanded its engagement with contemporary legal and constitutional challenges through initiatives such as the **Commonwealth Institute for Justice Education and Research (CIJER)**, and the **Commonwealth Comparative Constitutional and Public Law Project**, initiated in 2019. These initiatives reflect the Association's continuing commitment to interdisciplinary research, justice education, comparative constitutional inquiry and legal reform.

As legal education responds to technological transformations, changing professional expectations and evolving global realities, CLEA continues to serve as an important forum for dialogue, cooperation and institutional development. Its enduring vision is to strengthen legal education through shared knowledge, academic collaboration and engagement with the challenges facing contemporary legal systems. The Commonwealth Legal Education Association remains committed to building a connected, inclusive and forward-looking community of legal educators and institutions, advancing the cause of excellence in legal education throughout the Commonwealth. Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, Senior Professor, Indian Law Institute; Member, NALSA, and Former Member, Law Commission of India, is the President of the Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA).

Website: www.clea.ac **Email Id:** Info@clea.ac

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Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha
Judge, Supreme Court of India

FROM THE DESK OF THE PATRON

CLEA First Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026
Hyderabad, 21–22 November 2026

November 10, 2026

It is with great pleasure that I extend my greetings to the Commonwealth Legal Education Association's 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026, convened in Hyderabad under the theme "Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition". At a time when the institutions of law are confronted with profound changes in society, technology, and the administration of justice, the responsibility of preparing the next generation of legal professionals assumes renewed significance. They must be equipped not merely to inherit the traditions of law, but to understand their foundations and carry forward the constitutional commitment to justice.

Law seeks to bring order to human relationships, to reconcile liberty with authority, and to secure justice in a world where circumstances are seldom equal. Yet the mere existence of law does not guarantee justice. A Constitution may declare rights, and courts may give them meaning, but the life of those rights depends upon the character and competence of those who invoke, interpret, and administer the law. There is a difference between knowing what the law permits and understanding what the law demands of us. The former may be acquired through instruction; the latter develops through reflection, experience, and engagement with those whom the law is meant to serve. It is for this reason that clinical methods and legal aid must move from the margins of the curriculum to its core.

This distinction must also guide our engagement with emerging technologies. Artificial intelligence may retrieve authorities and organise information with remarkable speed, but the capacity to generate a legal answer must not be confused with the responsibility of arriving at a just conclusion. Courts have already been confronted with authorities that never existed. Whatever a tool produces, the student, researcher, lawyer, or judge who relies upon it remains answerable for it.

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This balance between enduring principle and new possibility is captured by the Conference motto, "Tradition in Thought. Transformation in Learning." Across a Commonwealth of fifty-six members, where a shared inheritance meets diverse constitutional experiences, globalising legal education cannot mean convergence on a single model. It must mean shared commitments among systems that remain free to learn from one another, with every institution participating as a partner.

I commend the President of CLEA for establishing this annual platform, and hope that its deliberations will be carried forward through sustained institutional initiatives. The law ultimately derives its moral strength not from the power it confers, but from the responsibility it imposes upon those who exercise that power. If legal education cultivates this understanding, it will have served not merely the profession, but the constitutional promise of justice itself.

I extend my best wishes for the success of the Conference.

Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha
Judge, Supreme Court of India
Patron, Commonwealth Legal Education Association

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सत्यमेव जयते

R. Venkataramani
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FROM THE DESK OF THE PATRON

CLEA First Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026
Hyderabad, 21–22 November 2026

November 2026

Dear Participants,

Legal education occupies a singular place in the life of a constitutional democracy. It is here that the authority of law is first encountered as an intellectual discipline, and where the responsibility of exercising that authority ought first to be understood. The question before us is therefore larger than how to prepare graduates for a changing profession. It is how to prepare a profession worthy of the trust that law necessarily demands.

The theme of the CLEA First Annual International Conference on Legal Education, "Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition," deserves to be approached in this spirit. Globalisation of legal education cannot mean the uncritical adoption of a uniform curriculum or the circulation of familiar ideas under new labels. It must mean an enlarged capacity to reason across legal traditions, to recognise the limits of one's own assumptions, and to address problems whose consequences do not stop at national borders. The Commonwealth provides a particularly valuable setting for this inquiry: a space of related legal histories, but also of profoundly different constitutional choices and social realities.

We are witnessing changes that unsettle the very methods by which legal knowledge is acquired and applied. Artificial intelligence can retrieve, arrange and generate legal material with extraordinary speed. Yet the existence of an answer is not the same as the exercise of judgment. The lawyer must still ask whether an authority is sound, whether a distinction is material, whether an argument is fair and whether its consequences are just. In a profession founded upon duties to the court, the client and the public, responsibility cannot be outsourced to a technological system. The future of legal education will depend, in part, upon its ability to teach students to use these instruments without surrendering intellectual independence.

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There is also a more enduring challenge. Legal education must not become so preoccupied with professional technique that it loses sight of the human condition to which law responds. Constitutional guarantees, procedural safeguards and the language of rights acquire meaning in the lives of those who seek protection from institutions. A law school that teaches doctrinal precision without ethical seriousness, or advocacy without an understanding of public responsibility, offers an incomplete education. Equally, a commitment to justice without disciplined legal reasoning cannot sustain the rule of law. The two must be cultivated together.

I am sure that this Conference will move beyond a catalogue of emerging challenges towards a serious conversation about the institutions required to meet them: rigorous research, credible standards of academic integrity, clinical engagement, responsible technological training and meaningful cooperation between the academy, the Bar and the Bench. International exchange is valuable not because every jurisdiction should arrive at the same answer, but because the questions asked elsewhere may help us see more clearly what our own institutions have overlooked.

I congratulate the Commonwealth Legal Education Association and its President, Professor (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, on initiating this continuing forum. I extend my warm greetings to the distinguished members of the judiciary, educators, practitioners, researchers and students participating in Hyderabad. May the deliberations be marked by intellectual candour and a willingness to translate ideas into institutional practice. The lasting contribution of legal education is not merely that it teaches the law as it stands, but that it prepares those who will be answerable for what the law becomes.

With warm regards and best wishes,

Dr. R. Venkataramani
Attorney General for India
Patron, Commonwealth Legal Education Association

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Justice E.V. Venugopal

HIGH COURT FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA
Hyderabad - 500 066.
Phone : Off : 040 2344 6394

FROM THE DESK OF THE CHAIRPERSON, ORGANISING COMMITTEE

11th day of November, 2026

Respected Esteemed Participants,

The relationship between legal education and the administration of justice is neither distant nor incidental. What begins as a method of learning in a law school eventually becomes a method of argument in a court, a standard of professional conduct and, at times, a decision affecting liberty, livelihood or dignity. It is for this reason that a discussion on the future of legal education is of immediate concern to the judiciary.

I am pleased that the Commonwealth Legal Education Association has brought together judges, legal educators, members of the profession and scholars for its First Annual International Conference on Legal Education in Hyderabad. The Conference offers an opportunity to examine an important question: whether the education we impart is preparing future lawyers not merely to enter the profession, but to discharge its responsibilities with competence and integrity.

The quality of justice depends in no small measure on the quality of assistance available to the court. A lawyer must be able to identify the issue that truly requires determination, distinguish binding authority from persuasive material, present the record faithfully and recognise an argument that cannot responsibly be advanced. These are not skills that should be left entirely to experience after graduation. They call for sustained training in legal method, drafting, evidence, procedure and ethical decision-making. Clinical legal education and carefully supervised engagement with real legal problems can connect academic understanding with the discipline of professional responsibility.

The changing conditions of adjudication make this task more pressing. Electronic records, virtual proceedings and new forms of digital evidence are reshaping how courts and lawyers work. Artificial intelligence raises additional questions about the reliability of research, the authenticity of material placed before a court, confidentiality and the accountability of those who rely on automated outputs. A legal education responsive to these developments must teach both technological capability and the habit of verification. Neither a pleading nor a judicial conclusion becomes trustworthy merely because it has been produced efficiently.

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Justice E.V. Venugopal

HIGH COURT FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA
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An equally important measure of legal education is its contribution to access to justice. The ability to explain a legal position clearly, to listen to persons unfamiliar with legal processes and to assist those who lack resources is not separate from professional excellence; it is part of it. Law schools must therefore regard legal aid, professional ethics and public service as central to the formation of lawyers. At the same time, universities should remain places where established practices can be examined critically and improvements proposed with intellectual rigour.

The Commonwealth setting gives this Conference particular significance. Jurisdictions may share elements of legal tradition while differing in their court structures, methods of training and approaches to professional regulation. There is much to gain from studying these differences with care, especially where experience can inform better teaching, more effective practical training and stronger cooperation between judicial and academic institutions.

I commend the Commonwealth Legal Education Association, its President Professor (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, and all those associated with organising this initiative. I extend my sincere thanks to the Hon'ble Judges who have graciously consented to chair and co-chair the sessions, to the distinguished speakers and delegates from India and other Commonwealth jurisdictions, and to everyone who has contributed in one way or another to the success of this Conference. I welcome the distinguished participants to Hyderabad and trust that the Conference will produce thoughtful, workable ideas that extend beyond these two days. If the classroom and the courtroom are to serve the same constitutional promise of justice, their conversation must be continuous.

With best wishes,



(Justice E.V. Venugopal)
Judge, High Court for the State of Telangana
Chairperson, Organising Committee, CLEA

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Welcome Note from Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar
President, CLEA & Conference Chair

November 2026

Greetings from CLEA!

On behalf of the Commonwealth Legal Education Association, I extend a warm and respectful welcome to the distinguished members of the judiciary, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, legal educators, practitioners, researchers and students joining us in Hyderabad for the CLEA First Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026. This gathering is especially meaningful to us because it marks the beginning of an annual Commonwealth conversation devoted expressly to the institutions, methods and responsibilities of legal education.

Our theme, "Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition," is not intended merely to describe the changes around us. It asks what legal education itself must be prepared to change. Across jurisdictions, the practice of law is being transformed by artificial intelligence, cross-border transactions, new forms of dispute resolution, demands for accessible justice and growing scrutiny of professional and academic integrity. These developments compel us to revisit the relationship between legal knowledge, legal skills, public responsibility and the institutions through which they are taught.

The Commonwealth is particularly well placed to host this conversation. Our jurisdictions share strands of legal history and professional tradition, yet their universities, courts and communities encounter markedly different conditions. That diversity offers a rich field for comparative learning. Globalising legal education should not mean exporting a single model from one jurisdiction to another. It should mean creating opportunities for genuine two-way exchange, in which a well-resourced institution and a smaller law school, an experienced scholar and a young teacher, can contribute equally to the development of better ideas and practices.

Professor N.R. Madhava Menon's enduring contribution reminds us that reform in legal education is ultimately inseparable from reform in the administration of justice. His insistence on rigorous professional training, clinical learning and the social responsibilities of law schools continues to challenge us. Yet the demands of the present require us to carry that vision further: to rethink how legal research is taught and assessed, how citation and academic integrity are protected, how technology is integrated without weakening independent thought, and how students encounter the lived realities of law beyond the classroom.

For CLEA, this Conference is therefore not conceived as an isolated event. We seek to build a continuing international platform through which universities, courts, professional bodies and researchers can identify shared concerns, examine workable reforms and sustain cooperation after the formal sessions conclude.

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Among the areas deserving particular attention are comparative curriculum development, clinical and experiential education, research methodology and legal writing, responsible use of artificial intelligence, faculty development and opportunities for emerging scholars. The ambition is not to produce agreement for its own sake, but to generate serious engagement capable of informing institutional action.

I am deeply grateful to **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant**, Chief Justice of India and Chief Patron of CLEA, who has graciously consented to be the Chief Guest of this Conference and to inaugurate it. We are deeply honoured that His Lordship will set the tone for our deliberations, and I express our heartfelt gratitude for the same. His Lordship's guidance and encouragement have been a constant source of strength for this initiative, and the abiding commitment to legal education, to the strengthening of the justice delivery system and to the idea that courts and law schools must work together has shaped the vision of this Conference from its very conception.

We are equally honoured by the presence of **Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.S. Narasimha**, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Patron, CLEA, as the Guest of Honour, who has graciously consented to address the Inaugural Session. His Lordship's scholarship and deep engagement with questions of constitutional law and legal reform will lend the Conference both direction and depth, and we are most grateful for his time and generosity.

I also gratefully acknowledge the support extended to CLEA's endeavours by **Dr. R. Venkataramani**, Learned Attorney General for India and Patron of CLEA.

I record my sincere gratitude and deepest regards to **Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Sam Koshy**, Acting Chief Justice of Telangana; **Hon'ble Smt. Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya**, Judge of the High Court for the State of Telangana and Advisor of the Organising Committee and **Hon'ble Mr. Justice E.V. Venugopal**, Judge of the High Court for the State of Telangana and Chairman of the Organising Committee; for their valuable leadership in the organisation of this Conference. I also thank our collaborating institutions, distinguished speakers, delegates and colleagues whose commitment has made this initiative possible.

I hope that when we look back upon this first gathering, its significance will be found not only in the quality of the discussions held in Hyderabad, but in the relationships established, the questions pursued and the improvements set in motion across our institutions. A Commonwealth committed to the future of justice must also be committed to the future of those who teach, study and practise law. It is in that spirit that I welcome you all and wish the Conference every success.



Sr. Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar
President, Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)
Senior Professor, Indian Law Institute & Member, NALSA
Former Member, Law Commission of India

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About the Conference

GLOBALISING LEGAL EDUCATION

Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition

"Tradition in Thought. Transformation in Learning."

Legal education across the Commonwealth is undergoing a significant transformation. The rapid integration of artificial intelligence into classrooms, legal research, writing and professional practice has raised fundamental questions concerning legal learning, independent reasoning, assessment and academic integrity. At the same time, law schools continue to confront broader challenges relating to access to justice, clinical legal education, effective legal aid clinics, accessible legal language and continuing professional education.

The **CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026**, is conceived as a platform to examine these interconnected challenges and explore practical responses for the future of legal education and the legal profession. It will bring together Chief Justices, judges, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, senior academics, practitioners, researchers and legal educators through plenary discussions, thematic sessions, academic presentations and a senior colloquium.

A central objective of the Conference is to strengthen cooperation across the Commonwealth while recognising the diversity of its legal systems and educational traditions. Globalising legal education is not about adopting a uniform model, but about encouraging meaningful exchange, sharing institutional experiences and identifying common principles and good practices that can strengthen legal education across jurisdictions.

The inaugural Conference marks the beginning of CLEA's vision of an **annual international gathering on legal education**, to be hosted in rotation across Commonwealth jurisdictions. It seeks not merely to deliberate upon contemporary challenges but to establish an enduring platform for academic collaboration, policy dialogue and institutional engagement.

Hosted in India, the Conference also provides an opportunity to bring India's rich legal and pedagogical traditions into conversation with wider Commonwealth experiences. Hyderabad, with its strong judicial and academic institutions and growing technological ecosystem, offers an appropriate setting for this engagement between legal tradition and technological transformation. The Conference is guided by its motto:

TRADITION IN THOUGHT. TRANSFORMATION IN LEARNING.

Conference at a Glance

DAY 1 | SATURDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2026

09:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Registration
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Networking & Tea
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	**Inaugural Ceremony**
12:00 PM – 01:30 PM	**Session I: Uniform Citation for the Commonwealth – Colloquium of Judges, Senior Academicians, Vice-Chancellors and Professors**
01:30 PM – 02:30 PM	Lunch
02:30 PM – 04:00 PM	**Session II: Technological Overreach and Academic Integrity**
04:00 PM – 04:30 PM	Tea Break
04:30 PM – 06:00 PM	**Session III: Integrating Clinical Legal Education in Core Legal Subjects**
6:00 PM– 07:00 PM	**Paper Presentations**
07:30 PM onwards	Cultural Programme followed by Dinner

DAY 2 | SUNDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2026

09:00 AM – 09:30 AM	**Plenary Session**
09:30 AM – 10:45 AM	**Session IV: Research Ethics and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence**
10:45 AM – 11:15 AM	Tea Break
11:15 AM – 12:30 PM	**Session V: Reimagining and Reformulating Legal Aid Clinics in Law Schools / Continuing Legal Education**
12:30 PM – 02:00 PM	**Valedictory Ceremony**
02:00 PM onwards	Closing Lunch

COMMONWEALTH LEGAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Inaugural Ceremony

Patrons & President, CLEA
The Organizing Committee

Cordially invite you to the Inaugural Ceremony of
CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on

LEGAL EDUCATION, 2026

Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition

"Tradition in Thought. Transformation in Learning"

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant
Chief Justice of India
has kindly consented to be the Chief Guest to deliver the Inaugural Address

in the august presence of

Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. S. Narasimha
Judge, Supreme Court of India

On Saturday, 21st November, 2026 at 10:30 A.M.
Novotel, Hyderabad, Telangana

Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar
President, CLEA &
Conference Chair

Justice E.V. Venugopal
Judge, High Court of Telangana &
Chairperson, Organising Committee

Justice P. Sam Koshy
Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana & Chief Advisor, Organising Committee

Please be seated by 9:50 A.M. | This invitation is non-transferable
RSVP: Dr. Ruchi Sharma D., Conference Secretary | (M) +91 – 8248515696 | cleahyderabad@gmail.com
Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Conference Coordinator | (M) +91 – 8627869564

Inaugural Programme

Saturday, 21st November, 2026 | 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

10:30 A.M.	Arrival of Dignitaries and Lighting of the Lamp
10:35 A.M.	Welcome Address by **Hon'ble Mr. Justice E. V. Venugopal**, Judge, High Court of Telangana & Chairman, Organizing Committee
10:40 A.M.	Introductory Address by **Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar**, President, CLEA and Conference Chair
10:48 A.M.	Address by Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Sam Koshy, Acting Chief Justice of High Court of Telangana
10:55 A.M.	Address by **Mr. Tushar Mehta**, Solicitor General of India
11:05 A.M.	Address by the **Dr. R. Venkataramani**, Ld. Attorney General for India
11:15 A.M.	Address by **Hon. Justice Abdul Ghanee Mohamed**, Chief Justice of Maldives
11:25 A.M.	Address by Guest of Honour **Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.S. Narasimha**, Judge, Supreme Court of India
11:35 A.M.	Presentation of the CLEA Prof. Madhava Menon Memorial Award
11:40 A.M.	Inaugural Address by the Chief Guest **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant**, Chief Justice of India
12:00 P.M.	Vote of Thanks by **Mr. A. Sudarshan Reddy**, Advocate General of Telangana

Master of Ceremonies: **Dr. Ruchi Sharma D.**, Conference Secretary & Joint General Secretary, CLEA
Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Conference Coordinator & Student Convener, CLEA

Technical Session I

DAY 1 | 21st NOVEMBER 2026 (SATURDAY) | 12:00 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.

UNIFORM CITATION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH: COLLOQUIUM OF JUDGES, SENIOR ACADEMICIANS, VICE-CHANCELLORS AND PROFESSORS

SUB-THEMES

- A shared Commonwealth-wide standard for legal citation
- Practical barriers to harmonisation
- A possible consensus framework or roadmap for adoption by law schools and journals

Welcome Address (3 minutes): Mr. Tera Rajnikanth Reddy, Addl. Advocate General, State of Telangana, Hyderabad

Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Aparesh Kumar, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Co-Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka

Keynote Speaker (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. A. Dharmadhikari, Chief Justice, High Court of Madras

Speakers (7 minutes each)	Discussants (3 minutes each)
• **Hon'ble Mr. Justice C. S. Dias** Judge, High Court of Kerala • **Hon'ble Mr. Justice O. P. Shukla** Judge, High Court of Delhi • **Prof. (Dr.) Harpreet Kaur** Vice-Chancellor, National Law University, Jodhpur • **Prof. (Dr.) Richa Chaudhary** Dean, School of Law, SGT University, Gurugram	• **Prof. (Dr.) Srikrishna Deva Rao** Vice-Chancellor, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad • **Prof. (Dr.) Jai Shankar Singh** Vice-Chancellor, RGNUL Punjab • **Prof. Dr. N. Kayalvizhi Nadimuthu** Principal, Chennai Dr. Ambedkar Government Law College, Tamil Nadu • **Dr. P. George Giri** Advocate, Supreme Court of India

Moderator: Prof. (Dr.) Gigimon V.S., Professor of Law, Dean (Academics) and Director of Law School, Amity University, Mumbai

Vote of Thanks (3 minutes): Dr. Anita Patil, Executive Member, CLEA-Asia & Conference Coordinator

Rapporteurs: Ms. Anvesha Chaturvedi, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M. | Lunch

Technical Session II

DAY 1 | 21st NOVEMBER 2026 (SATURDAY) | 2:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

TECHNOLOGICAL OVERREACH AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

SUB-THEMES

- Where legitimate technological assistance ends and technological overreach begins
- Detection tools, honour codes and assessment redesign
- Institutional approaches that protect integrity without stifling legitimate innovation

Welcome Address (3 minutes): Dr. Vikram Singh Arya, Secretary, CLEA-Asia & Organising Secretary

Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Co-Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Soumen Sen, Chief Justice, High Court of Kerala

Keynote Speaker (8 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi, Chief Justice, High Court of Bombay

Speakers (7 minutes each)	Discussants (3 minutes each)
• **Hon'ble Mr. Justice D.K. Singh** Judge, High Court of Karnataka • **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vijaysen Reddy** Judge, High Court of Telangana • **Prof. (Dr.) V. C. Vivekanandan** Vice-Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur • **Mr. Jatinder Jay Cheema** Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India • **Mr. Loknath Behera** Former State Police Chief and DGP Kerala; Ex-MD KMRL and KWML	• **Prof. (Dr.) Ashok R Patil** Vice-Chancellor, NUSRL, Ranchi • **Dr. Sagee Geetha Sethu** Head, School of Law, Amity University, Dubai • **Mr. Arun Varghese** Advocate, High Court of Kerala

Moderator: Prof. (Dr.) Kokila Lankathilake Konasinghe, Head, Department of Public and International Law, University of Colombo

Vote of Thanks (3 minutes): Dr. K. Prasanna Rani, Principal and Head, University College of Law, Telangana University & Conference Coordinator

Rapporteurs: Ms. Afreen Afshar Alam, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

4:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M. | High-Tea

Technical Session III

DAY 1 | 21st NOVEMBER 2026 (SATURDAY) | 4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

INTEGRATING CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION IN CORE LEGAL SUBJECTS

SUB-THEMES

- Models for embedding experiential learning within doctrinal subjects
- Assessment design
- Faculty capacity and institutional support for sustainable clinical teaching

Welcome Address (3 minutes): Adv. K. R. R. Aiyyappamani, Member, Bar Council of Tamil Nadu & Vice-President, CLEA-Asia (India)

Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Co-Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Ms. Justice Lisa Gill, Chief Justice, High Court of Andhra Pradesh

Keynote Speaker (8 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir

Speakers (7 minutes each)	Discussants (3 minutes each)
• **Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. Lakshman** Judge, High Court of Telangana • **Hon'ble Ms. Justice Jyotsna Rewal Dua** Judge, High Court of Himachal Pradesh • **Ms. Aishwarya Bhati** Additional Solicitor General of India • **Prof. (Dr.) Faizan Mustafa** Vice-Chancellor, CNLU, Patna • **Prof. (Dr.) Vani Kesari** Dean, Faculty of Law, CUSAT	• **Hon'ble Ms. Justice Savitri Ratho** Judge, High Court of Orissa • **Prof. (Dr.) S. S. Jaswal** Dean, Academic Affairs, HPNLU, Shimla • **Prof. (Dr.) Bindu S. Ronald** Vice-Chancellor, MNLU, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

Moderator: Dr. Renjini Ponnan Sheela, Senior Lecturer, University of Greater Manchester, Academic Centre, RAK, UAE

Vote of Thanks (3 minutes): Mr. Sharyaurai Riang, Media Convener, CLEA

Rapporteurs: Ms. Shilpi Jain, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. | Paper Presentations

Paper Presentations

DAY 1 | 21st NOVEMBER 2026 (SATURDAY) | 6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

PAPER PRESENTATION SESSION

THEME

- Presentation of research papers on contemporary issues in legal education
- Scholarly engagement with emerging challenges, innovative pedagogies and institutional practices in legal education
- Discussion and feedback on research contributions

Chair: Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Preeta A.K., Judge, High Court of Kerala

Paper Presenters

Facilitators:

- **Ms. Nabila Zehra,** Assistant Professor, School of Law, SGT University & Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute
- **Mr. Sharyaurai Riang,** Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute & Media Convener, CLEA

7:30 P.M. onwards | Cultural Programme followed by Dinner

Plenary Session

DAY 2 | 22nd NOVEMBER 2026 (SUNDAY) | 9:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

Chair: Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, Senior Professor, ILI & President, CLEA

Hosted by:
Dr. Ruchi Sharma D., Joint General Secretary, CLEA
Prof. (Dr.) Kokila Lankathilake Konasinghe, Vice-President, CLEA-Asia
Dr. Giri Sankar S.S, Vice-President, CLEA-Asia
Dr. Renjini Ponnan Sheela, Executive Member, CLEA

AGENDA:

- **Important Announcements:** Communication of key announcements and organisational updates concerning CLEA and its forthcoming initiatives.
- **Discussion on Future Plans:** Deliberations on CLEA's future priorities, proposed activities, and strategies for strengthening legal education and academic collaboration across the Commonwealth.
- **Networking among Academics and Institutions:** Facilitating interaction and fostering institutional partnerships, academic exchange, and collaborative initiatives among participating academics and institutions.
- **Discussion on Membership and Student Engagement:** Deliberations on encouraging greater student participation, and strengthening student engagement through academic activities, collaborative initiatives, and opportunities for meaningful involvement in CLEA's programmes.
- **Constitution of a Committee for Preparing a Blueprint on Legal Education:** Discussion on the constitution and mandate of a committee entrusted with preparing a comprehensive blueprint for the future development, reform, and advancement of legal education.

Technical Session IV

DAY 2 | 22nd NOVEMBER 2026 (SUNDAY) | 9:30 A.M. – 10:45 A.M.

RESEARCH ETHICS AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

SUB-THEMES

- Authorship, attribution, citation, originality and data reliability
- Fabricated authorities, inaccurate sources and over-reliance on automated research; verification of AI-generated content
- Principles for transparent and responsible use of AI by researchers, scholars and students

Welcome Address (3 minutes): Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Student Convener, CLEA & Conference Convener

Chair (10 minutes): Dr. R. Venkataramani, Learned Attorney General for India

Co-Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. Sundar, Chief Justice, High Court of Manipur

Keynote Speaker (8 minutes): Dr. Mizanur Rahman, Former Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh

Speakers (7 minutes each)	Discussants (3 minutes each)
• **Hon'ble Dr. Justice A. K. Jayasankaran Nambiar** Judge, High Court of Kerala • **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Suraj Govindraj** Judge, High Court of Karnataka • **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shravan Kumar Natcharaju** Judge, High Court of Telangana • **Mr. Guru Krishna Kumar** Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India	• **Hon'ble Ms. Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju** Judge, High Court of Delhi • **Prof. (Dr.) Jyoti J. Mozika** Vice-Chancellor, National Law University Meghalaya • **Ms. Theshani Weligamage** Lecturer (Research track), Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology

Moderator: Dr. Jayaram RE, Dean, School of Law, Mahindra University, Hyderabad

Vote of Thanks (3 minutes): Mr. Avadhesh Deo Pandey, Student Convener, CLEA-Asia & Conference Convener

Rapporteurs: Mr. Sharyaurai Riang, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

10:45 A.M. – 11:15 A.M. | High-Tea

Technical Session V

DAY 2 | 22nd NOVEMBER 2026 (SUNDAY) | 11:15 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

REIMAGINING AND REFORMULATING LEGAL AID CLINICS IN LAW SCHOOLS / CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

SUB-THEMES

- Design and delivery of law-school legal aid clinics: technology-enabled and community-partnered models; funding, supervision and quality assurance
- Continuing legal education: keeping the profession current with technological and regulatory change; law schools as lifelong-learning partners

Welcome Address (3 minutes): Ms. Nabila Zehra, Head, Research and Publications, CLEA & Conference General Convener

Chair (10 minutes): Hon. Justice AHMD Nawaz, Judge, Supreme Court of Sri Lanka

Co-Chair (10 minutes): Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim

Speakers	Discussants
• **Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya** Judge, High Court of Telangana • **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Saurabh Banerjee** Judge, High Court of Delhi • **Mr. Pradeep Rai** Senior Advocate & President, Supreme Court Bar Association • **Mr. Apoorv Kurup** Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India	• **Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Preeta A.K.** Judge, High Court of Kerala • **Capt. G. S. Rathee** Advisor & Board Member, BCKIC, Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India • **Dr. Rangaswamy D.** Assistant Professor of Law, Karnataka State Law University, Navanagar, Hubballi

Moderator: Dr. Giri Sankar S.S., Principal, St. Dominic's College of Law, Kanjirappally, Kerala

Vote of Thanks (3 minutes): Ms. Afreen Afshar Alam, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

Rapporteurs: Mr. Avadhesh Deo Pandey, Doctoral Scholar, Indian Law Institute

12:30 P.M. – 2:00 P.M. | Valedictory Ceremony | 2:00 P.M. onwards | Closing Lunch

COMMONWEALTH LEGAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Valedictory Ceremony

Patrons & President, CLEA
The Organizing Committee

Cordially invite you to the Valedictory Ceremony of
CLEA 1st Annual International Conference
On

LEGAL EDUCATION, 2026

Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition

"Tradition in Thought. Transformation in Learning"

Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.M. Sundresh

Judge, Supreme Court of India

has kindly consented to be the Chief Guest and deliver the Valedictory Address

On Sunday, 22nd November, 2026 at 12:30 P.M.
Novotel, Hyderabad, Telangana

Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar
President, CLEA &
Conference Chair

Justice E.V. Venugopal
Judge, High Court of Telangana &
Chairperson, Organising Committee

Justice P. Sam Koshy
Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana & Chief Advisor, Organising Committee

Please be seated by 12:15 P.M. | This invitation is non-transferable
RSVP: Dr. Ruchi Sharma D., Conference Secretary | (M) +91 – 8248515696 | cleahyderabad@gmail.com
Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Conference Coordinator | (M) +91 – 8627869564

Valedictory Programme

Sunday, 22nd November, 2026 | 12:30 – 2:00 P.M.

12:30 P.M.	Arrival of Dignitaries
12:35 P.M.	Welcome Address by **Hon'ble Mr. Justice E. V. Venugopal**, Judge, High Court of Telangana & Chairman, Organizing Committee
12:40 P.M.	Conference Overview by **Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya**, Judge, High Court of Telangana & Advisor, Organising Committee
12:45 P.M.	Way Forward and Statement of Future Commonwealth by **Prof. Dr. S. Sivakumar**, President, CLEA and Conference Chair **Adoption of the Hyderabad Statement on the Future of Commonwealth Legal Education, 2026**
12:55 P.M.	Address by **Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Sam Koshy**, Acting Chief Justice of High Court of Telangana
1:05 P.M.	Address by **Dr. R. Venkataramani**, Ld. Attorney General for India
1:15 P.M.	Address by **Hon. Justice AHMD Nawaz**, Judge, Supreme Court of Sri Lanka
1:25 P.M.	Valedictory Address by the Chief Guest **Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. M. Sundresh**, Judge, Supreme Court of India
1:45 P.M.	Vote of Thanks by **Dr. Ruchi Sharma D.**, Joint General Secretary, CLEA & Director, CIJER

Master of Ceremonies: Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Student Convener, CLEA

Background Paper*

CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026 · Hyderabad · 21–22 November 2026

Introduction - Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition

The Conference and Its Central Question

Legal education across the Commonwealth has reached a turning point. Generative artificial intelligence has moved within a few years from novelty to daily use in legal research, writing and teaching. Graduates leave law schools for a profession whose clients, tools and regulators are all changing, and courts have begun to ask openly whether a law degree prepares a graduate for the work that follows it. At the same time, older questions remain unanswered: how law schools should serve access to justice, how clinical method can move from the margins of the curriculum into its core, and how the profession can keep learning after admission. The CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026 brings these questions to one table and asks a single question of all of them: *what must legal education become to remain equal to the profession it serves?*[1]

This background paper is offered as the common starting point for the deliberations in Hyderabad. It does not attempt to settle the question. It sets out what is known, identifies where the evidence is thin, and frames the issues on which the judges, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, academics, regulators and practitioners assembled at the Conference are invited to deliberate.

The Developments That Make the Conference Necessary

Five developments, noted in the Conference rationale, give the Conference its urgency. *First*, generative artificial intelligence has entered legal research, writing and teaching faster than institutional and regulatory policy has been able to respond. *Second*, questions of academic integrity have become harder to answer, because the line between legitimate technological assistance and misconduct is harder to draw and to enforce across jurisdictions. *Third*, the absence of a uniform Commonwealth citation standard continues to complicate scholarship, judicial writing, publishing and the exchange of legal ideas across borders, at a moment when fabricated citations have become a professional hazard. *Fourth*, clinical legal education and law-school legal aid clinics remain unevenly integrated into the core curriculum, despite their central place in the delivery of access to justice. *Fifth*, continuing legal education and plain legal language have yet to be treated as shared institutional responsibilities of the Commonwealth legal community.

These developments are not separate problems that happen to arrive together. The same generative tool that unsettles the assessment of a first-year essay also produces the fabricated authority that a court must later strike out. The same gap between doctrine and practice that troubles judicial recruitment appears in the clinic that exists on paper but not in the community it is meant to serve. The paper treats them, therefore, as connected parts of one inquiry.

How the Paper Is Organised

This Introduction sets out the Conference theme and the foundations on which every session builds. After a short statement of approach, the Introduction examines the purposes of Commonwealth legal education. They cover its colonial inheritance and the national reforms that followed, the opportunities and asymmetries of globalisation, the changing demands of professional competence, the effect of technology on legal learning, and the public purpose of law schools. They close with questions that run across the whole Conference.

The five Parts that follow correspond to the five Technical Sessions, and move from the most immediate pressure point to the widest obligation. Part I takes up the integrity of assessment in the age of generative AI. Part II moves from the integrity of a student's work to the integrity of the sources on which all legal reasoning depends, and considers whether a uniform Commonwealth citation standard can be built. Part III shifts from how legal knowledge is shown to how it is used, and examines the integration of clinical method into core legal subjects. Part IV returns to artificial intelligence in research and scholarship, where questions of authorship, verification and confidentiality take a different form. Part V looks outward, to the law school's obligations to the communities it serves through legal aid clinics and to the profession through continuing legal education. Part VI draws the threads together for the Plenary

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* Prepared by Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, Conference Chair & President, Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA), with the support of Dr. Ruchi Sharma D., Conference Secretary & Joint General Secretary, CLEA; Ms. Sheenam Thakur, Conference Co-ordinator & Student Convener, CLEA; Mr. Avadhesh Deo Pandey, Student Convener, CLEA-Asia; Mr. Sharyaurai Riang, Media Convener, CLEA; Ms. Afreen Afshar Alam, Conference Convener; Ms. Shilpi Jain, Student Convener; and Ms. Anvesha Chaturvedi, Student Convener.

[1] Commonwealth Legal Education Association, *CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026: Globalising Legal Education* (Conference Brochure, Hyderabad, 2026), "About the Conference" and "Rationale".

Session, which will consider the constitution of a committee to prepare a blueprint on legal education, and for the Valedictory Ceremony, which will consider the Hyderabad Statement.

The Parts correspond to the Conference sessions as follows:

Part	Theme	Conference session
Intro.	Globalising Legal Education: Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and the Future of the Legal Profession for a Commonwealth in Transition	Conference theme · all sessions
I	Technological Overreach and Academic Integrity	Technical Session II · 21 Nov · 2:30–4:00 PM
II	Uniform Citation for the Commonwealth: Colloquium of Judges, Senior Academicians, Vice-Chancellors and Professors	Technical Session I · 21 Nov · 12:00–1:30 PM
III	Integrating Clinical Legal Education in Core Legal Subjects	Technical Session III · 21 Nov · 4:30–6:00 PM
IV	Research Ethics and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence	Technical Session IV · 22 Nov · 9:30–10:45 AM
V	Reimagining and Reformulating Legal Aid Clinics in Law Schools/ Continuing Legal Education	Technical Session V · 22 Nov · 11:15 AM–12:30 PM
VI	Common Threads, the Blueprint on Legal Education and the Hyderabad Statement	Plenary Session · 22 Nov · 9:00–9:30 AM; Valedictory Ceremony · 22 Nov · 12:30–2:00 PM

The Conference sub-themes on *AI and Academics* and on *Legal Language and Access* do not have Parts of their own. They run across the paper. AI in teaching and assessment is treated in this Introduction and in Parts I and IV. Legal language, translation and plain drafting are treated in this Introduction, Part II and Part V. Each Part closes with questions for deliberation, which the session chairs and moderators may use to structure discussion.

The Approach: Shared Principles, Local Implementation

One idea runs through every Part of this paper. Globalising legal education does not mean convergence on a single jurisdictional model. The Commonwealth now has fifty-six members, with common law, civil law, mixed and customary legal orders, very different resources, and law schools answerable to their own constitutions, regulators and communities. The useful aim is what this paper calls *mutual intelligibility*: shared commitments and shared infrastructure that allow systems to learn from one another without being asked to become alike. Each Part applies that idea to its own subject. Part I proposes a shared baseline for the use of AI in assessment that each institution applies within its own rules. Part II proposes a common core for citation, with the existing style guides left in place. Part IV proposes shared ethical commitments with contextual implementation. Parts III and V recommend staged reform suited to an institution's capacity.

Three further threads recur and are drawn together in Part VI. The first is *accountability that cannot be delegated*: whatever a tool produces, the student, researcher, lawyer or judge who relies on it remains answerable for it. The second is *making reasoning visible*: assessment, clinical work and research all need methods that show how a conclusion was reached, not only what it is. The third is *equity of access*: reforms designed for the best-resourced institutions can widen the gaps they are meant to close, and every proposal in this paper is tested against the conditions of large, under-resourced law colleges.

> *The sections that follow set out the foundations of the Conference theme. They ask what Commonwealth law schools are for, how the inheritance of colonial legal education still shapes them, and how they should change under the pressure of globalisation, new technology and renewed judicial scrutiny of graduate competence. Three answers emerge: shared capacities rather than a shared curriculum, staged reform suited to limited resources, and the insistence that independent legal reasoning matters more, not less, in the age of AI. These answers set the frame for each of the five Technical Sessions.*

Commonwealth Law Schools and the Meaning of Globalisation

Commonwealth law schools face two demands. They must teach law as a discipline with its own history and methods, while preparing graduates for professional work whose clients, tools and settings are changing. For much of the twentieth century, a university degree, professional admission rules and vocational training divided these tasks. That arrangement is under pressure as legal services cross borders, regulators reconsider qualification, courts question graduates' readiness and generative artificial intelligence changes research and writing. These pressures affect Commonwealth jurisdictions differently.

This paper argues that "globalising legal education" in a Commonwealth context should be understood as the construction of shared commitments and shared infrastructure among systems that will remain different. Convergence on a single curriculum, a single route to qualification, or the educational model of the best-resourced members would be a mistake. The common law inheritance gave many Commonwealth jurisdictions a shared starting point but that inheritance is a thinner basis for cooperation than it appears. The Commonwealth now has fifty-six members, including states such as Mozambique, Rwanda, Gabon and Togo whose legal systems did not grow out of English law.[2] Even in jurisdictions with a common law foundation, legal education has been reshaped by national constitutions by the politics of decolonisation and by professional regulators with very different statutory mandates.

Meaningful cooperation of this kind involves exchange among institutions that each retain the authority to decide what their students need. It allows a Kenyan law school to borrow a clinical method from South Africa, or an Indian university to adapt a problem-based course designed in Australia, while each remains answerable to its own constitution, regulator and community. A uniform model, by contrast, treats one system's arrangements as the measure of quality and asks others to catch up. The history of legal education in the Commonwealth contains a good deal of the second, and the conference brochure is right to state that globalising legal education "does not mean convergence towards a single jurisdictional model."[3] The task is to give that statement practical content. "Legal education" here covers the university degree, vocational or professional training and learning after admission. "Commonwealth cooperation" means voluntary arrangements among institutions, professional bodies and governments. No Commonwealth-wide standard for legal education currently exists.

Historical Foundations and the Changing Purposes of Commonwealth Legal Education

The colonial inheritance

Legal education in most of the former British Empire began as an appendage of colonial administration. The courts needed pleaders, clerks and judges who could work in English or in English-derived procedure and legal training was organised to meet that need. In India, law teaching started in the mid-nineteenth century within government colleges and the new presidency universities and for a long time it was a part-time pursuit taught by practitioners to students who were often employed elsewhere.[4] The most prestigious route to the Bar ran through the Inns of Court in London. The resulting pattern had two tiers. A small elite was trained in England and a larger body of local practitioners was trained at home, usually in institutions with few full-time teachers and little research.

The same structure appeared in Africa. By 1960 it had become clear that training African lawyers mainly in London could not serve the needs of newly independent states. A committee chaired by Lord Denning reported in 1961 on legal education for students from Africa and its work formed part of a wider movement towards local law faculties and professional schools in Nigeria, Ghana and East Africa.[5] L.C.B. Gower argued that independent African states needed lawyers trained for the economic and constitutional tasks of new nations and that English professional models were a poor fit for that purpose.[6] Local legal education in much of the Commonwealth was created in a hurry, on a borrowed template, at the moment of independence and many of its later difficulties trace back to that origin.

India

India is an instructive case because it has tried several reform strategies in sequence. The Law Commission of India criticised the state of legal education as early as 1958, describing law colleges that depended heavily on part-time teachers and examinations that rewarded memorisation.[7] The Advocates Act, 1961 then gave the Bar Council of India the statutory function of promoting legal education and laying down its standards "in consultation with the Universities" with the power to recognise the universities whose law degrees qualify a person for enrolment.[8] This created a dual structure that remains central to Indian legal education. Universities award degrees but a professional body decides which degrees lead to enrolment.

American influence entered in the 1950s and 1960s, partly through Ford Foundation programmes that sent United States law teachers to Indian institutions and promoted the case method. Jayanth Krishnan's study of that period

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[2] Commonwealth Secretariat, "Gabon and Togo join the Commonwealth" (June 25, 2022), *available at*: https://thecommonwealth.org/news/gabon-and-togo-join-commonwealth (last visited on Oct. 14, 2026).

[3] Commonwealth Legal Education Association, *CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026: Globalising Legal Education* (Conference Brochure, Hyderabad, 2026), "About the Conference".

[4] Jayanth K. Krishnan, "Professor Kingsfield Goes to Delhi: American Academics, the Ford Foundation, and the Development of Legal Education in India" 46(4) *American Journal of Legal History* 447 (2004).

[5] *Report of the Committee on Legal Education for Students from Africa* (Chairman, Lord Denning) (Cmnd. 1255, HMSO, London, 1961).

[6] L.C.B. Gower, *Independent Africa: The Challenge to the Legal Profession* (Oliver Wendell Holmes Lectures, 1966) (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1967).

[7] Law Commission of India, *Fourteenth Report on Reform of Judicial Administration*, vol. I, ch. 25, paras 4-8 (Government of India, New Delhi, 1958).

[8] The Advocates Act, 1961 (Act 25 of 1961), s. 7(1)(h) and (i); *see also* ss. 24(1)(c) and 49(1)(d).

shows how ambitious those efforts were and how limited their lasting effect proved to be.[9] Indian scholars soon developed their own critique. Upendra Baxi's working paper for the University Grants Commission's regional workshops called for a "socially relevant" legal education, and the Commission's consolidated report of 1979 carried that call forward.[10]

The decisive institutional change came with the National Law School of India University, established under a Karnataka statute in 1986 and admitting its first students in 1988.[11] Under Prof N.R. Madhava Menon, the school offered a five-year integrated degree to students admitted straight from secondary school with full-time faculty, residential teaching and a curriculum that included clinical and interdisciplinary work. The model spread to a network of national law universities and it changed the market for Indian legal talent. Yves Dezalay and Bryant Garth describe this as a shift away from "entrenched local legal oligarchies" towards a smaller set of elite institutions closely connected to corporate law firms and international practice.[12] Excellence at a few institutions coexists with weak provision at many others and the gap between them shapes who enters the profession's most rewarded sectors.

Regulation has followed a parallel path. The Bar Council's Rules of Legal Education, 2008 set out the structure of the three-year and five-year degrees, including compulsory practical papers. In 2023 a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court upheld the Council's power to require an All India Bar Examination, overruling *V. Sudeer* v. *Bar Council of India* and describing the quality of lawyers as part of the administration of justice and access to justice.[13]

The United Kingdom

The structure that many Commonwealth systems inherited was formalised in England by the Ormrod Committee in 1971. It divided legal education into an academic stage, a vocational stage and a period of continuing education and it assumed that the university law degree would be the normal entry point to the profession.[14] Versions of this structure were adopted, sometimes by statute and sometimes by practice, across the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom has since moved away from its own model. The Legal Education and Training Review of 2013 found serious weaknesses in standards, access and flexibility and it recommended an outcomes-based approach to regulation.[15] The Solicitors Regulation Authority later introduced the Solicitors Qualifying Examination from September 2021, under which a candidate needs a degree or equivalent qualification in any subject, success in a centrally assessed examination and qualifying work experience.[16] The jurisdiction that supplied much of the Commonwealth's template has separated the law degree from qualification as a solicitor. The decision binds no one else but it shows that the inherited structure is a choice that can be revisited, even by the system that designed it.

South Africa, Canada, Australia and Malaysia

South Africa shows how a constitutional transformation can redefine what legal education is for. After 1994 the country moved to a four-year undergraduate LLB as the single qualification for legal practice, partly to widen access to a profession in which black South Africans were under-represented.[17] Two decades later, a national review by the Council on Higher Education placed every LLB programme under conditions or on notice of withdrawal in its first round of outcomes and its final report identified weak writing, uneven teaching of critical thinking and large classes as persistent problems.[18] Joel Modiri argues that the crisis should not be read as a failure to supply efficient practitioners. In his account it is a jurisprudential crisis, in which legal education has narrowed into the study of positive law at the expense of questions of justice that the Constitution places at its centre.[19]

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[9] Jayanth K. Krishnan, "Professor Kingsfield Goes to Delhi: American Academics, the Ford Foundation, and the Development of Legal Education in India" 46(4) *American Journal of Legal History* 447, 450 (2004).

[10] Upendra Baxi, "Notes Towards a Socially Relevant Legal Education: A Working Paper for the UGC Regional Workshops in Law," 51 *Journal of the Bar Council of India* 23-55 (1975); University Grants Commission, *Towards a Socially Relevant Legal Education: A Consolidated Report of the University Grants Commission's Workshops on Modernization of Legal Education* (UGC, New Delhi, 1979).

[11] The National Law School of India Act, 1986 (Karnataka Act 22 of 1986).

[12] Yves Dezalay and Bryant Garth, "Battles Around Legal Education Reform in India: From Entrenched Local Legal Oligarchies to Oligopolistic Universals", in Bryant G. Garth and Gregory C. Shaffer (eds.), *The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective* 185-212 (Oxford University Press, New York, 2022); *see also* Yves Dezalay and Bryant G. Garth, *Law as Reproduction and Revolution: An Interconnected History* (University of California Press, Oakland, 2021).

[13] *Bar Council of India* v. *Bonnie Foi Law College* [2023] 2 SCR 343, paras 19 and 34-35, overruling *V. Sudeer v. Bar Council of India* (1999) 3 SCC 176.

[14] *Report of the Committee on Legal Education* (Chairman, Ormrod J.) (Cmnd. 4595, HMSO, London, 1971).

[15] Julian Webb, Jane Ching, Paul Maharg and Avrom Sherr, *Setting Standards: The Future of Legal Services Education and Training Regulation in England and Wales* (Legal Education and Training Review, June 2013).

[16] Solicitors Regulation Authority, *SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations*, regs. 1.1 and 2.1.

[17] Qualification of Legal Practitioners Amendment Act 78 of 1997 (South Africa); *see now* Legal Practice Act 28 of 2014 (South Africa), s. 26(1)(a); Carmel van Niekerk, "The Four-Year Undergraduate LLB: Where to from Here?" 34(3) *Obiter* 533 (2013).

[18] Council on Higher Education, *The State of the Provision of the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Qualification in South Africa* (CHE, Pretoria, November 2018); see also "The Council on Higher Education's National Review of the LLB," *GoLegal* (Nov. 27, 2017), *available at:* https://www.golegal.co.za/council-higher-education-llb-review/ (last visited on Oct. 14, 2026).

[19] Joel M. Modiri, "The Crises in Legal Education" 46(3) *Acta Academica* 1 (2014).

Ralph Madlalate's history of South African legal education shows that successive waves of globalisation have been racialised and that calls for decolonisation of the curriculum respond to that history.[20]

Canada provides a different lesson. The Arthurs Report of 1983 urged Canadian law schools to strengthen research and to study law as an intellectual and social phenomenon, alongside professional training.[21] The professional regulators have kept considerable authority. The Federation of Law Societies of Canada sets a National Requirement that common law degrees must meet, and in 2018 the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the decisions of two law societies to refuse accreditation to a proposed law school at Trinity Western University.[22] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission later called on law schools to require all students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, covering Indigenous law, treaties, the legacy of residential schools and intercultural competency.[23] A national constitutional history shaped the core curriculum in a way no external model could have prescribed.

Australia followed a path of university-led reform with periodic national review. The Pearce Report of 1987 assessed every Australian law school and criticised narrow doctrinal teaching.[24] Admission rules still specify the substantive areas that an approved degree must cover, the so-called Priestley eleven. In 2010 the academic community produced six Threshold Learning Outcomes for the Bachelor of Laws, covering knowledge, ethics and professional responsibility, thinking skills, research skills, communication and collaboration and self-management.[25] These outcomes describe capacities and leave curriculum design to individual schools.

Malaysia shows the Commonwealth links that persist in professional qualification. Under its Legal Profession Act, the Legal Profession Qualifying Board may declare foreign qualifications sufficient for admission, and graduates of most foreign programmes must pass the Board's Certificate in Legal Practice examination before pupillage.[26] In 2026 the government announced plans to replace the Certificate with a New Bar Course, consisting of a conversion course for foreign-qualified candidates followed by a practice-based postgraduate certificate. The Board set up a task force in April 2026 to design the course, and the responsible minister has said it is expected to be implemented in 2028 or by 2029 at the latest. The reform is a stated plan still in preparation.[27] It reflects a choice that many jurisdictions face.

What the history shows

The division between university education and professional training persists everywhere but jurisdictions allocate responsibility between the two differently. Major reforms have drawn their purpose from domestic constitutional commitments, as in India, South Africa and Canada and imported models have worked best when local educators adapted them. A Commonwealth framework should build on these lessons and avoid the colonial habit of treating one system as the template for others.

Globalisation and the Changing Landscape of Legal Education

What globalisation has changed

Globalisation reaches law schools through concrete channels. A transaction negotiated in Mumbai may be governed by English law, financed through Singapore and arbitrated in London. Data protection, climate regulation, migration and sanctions also cross borders, while the mobility of students and teachers gives qualifications very different value across markets.

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[20] Ralph Madlalate, "Legal Education in South Africa: Racialized Globalizations, Crises, and Contestations," in Bryant G. Garth and Gregory C. Shaffer (eds.), *The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective* 157-184 (Oxford University Press, New York, 2022).

[21] Consultative Group on Research and Education in Law, *Law and Learning: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Chairman, H.W. Arthurs) (Minister of Supply and Services, Ottawa, 1983).

[22] *Law Society of British Columbia* v. *Trinity Western University*, 2018 SCC 32; *Trinity Western University* v. *Law Society of Upper Canada*, 2018 SCC 33; Federation of Law Societies of Canada, *National Requirement* (approved 2009, as amended).

[23] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (Winnipeg, 2015), Call to Action 28.

[24] Dennis Pearce, Enid Campbell and Don Harding, *Australian Law Schools: A Discipline Assessment for the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission* (Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1987).

[25] Sally Kift, Mark Israel and Rachael Field, *Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project: Bachelor of Laws Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Statement* (Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Strawberry Hills, December 2010).

[26] Legal Profession Act 1976 (Act 166) (Malaysia), ss. 3 (definition of "qualified person") and 5.

[27] "Govt Moves to Replace CLP with Practice-Based New Bar Course," *New Straits Times* (June 22, 2026), *available at:* https://www.nst.com.my/amp/news/nation/2026/06/1469612/govt-moves-replace-clp-practice-based-new-bar-course (last visited on Oct. 15, 2026); "New Bar Course Expected in 2028 or 2029 at Latest, Says Azalina," *Malay Mail* (Oct. 6, 2026), *available at:* https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2026/10/06/new-bar-course-expected-in-2028-or-2029-at-latest-says-azalina/237866 (last visited on Oct. 15, 2026); "New Bar Course to Start Within Three Years," *The Star* (Malaysia) (Oct. 7, 2026), *available at:* https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2026/10/07/new-bar-course-to-start-within-three-years (last visited on Oct. 15, 2026).

India's recent regulatory history shows these channels at work. In *Bar Council of India* v. *A.K. Balaji*, the Supreme Court held that foreign lawyers and firms could not practise law in India, in litigation or otherwise, while accepting that a casual "fly in and fly out" visit to give advice on foreign law might not amount to practice and that foreign lawyers could not be absolutely barred from international commercial arbitration, subject to regulation.[28] The Bar Council notified rules in March 2023 permitting registered foreign lawyers and firms to practise foreign and international law in non-litigious matters on a basis of reciprocity and amended them in May 2025 to tighten the conditions for short-term visits and for arbitration.[29]

The University Grants Commission adopted regulations in 2023 permitting foreign universities to establish campuses in India.[30] The National Education Policy, 2020 stated that legal education "needs to be competitive globally, adopting best practices and embracing new technologies" and in the same paragraph it urged state institutions to consider offering legal education bilingually.[31] The policy pulls towards international competitiveness and linguistic rootedness and Indian law schools have to serve both.

The expansion of India's corporate legal sector shows how the needs of global markets influence the way law is taught and practised. Empirical work collected by David Wilkins, Vikramaditya Khanna and David Trubek shows how liberalisation produced large domestic law firms and in-house legal departments that recruit heavily from national law universities and value skills in English drafting, transactional work and cross-border practice.[32] Swethaa Ballakrishnen's research on gender in elite Indian law firms adds that new sectors can open opportunities in unexpected ways, while still resting on embedded social advantage.[33] The influence of these employers on curricula, moot court culture and student aspiration is visible in the leading schools.

The opportunities of international collaboration

Comparative study strengthens analysis because a student who has seen how another system handles a problem understands her own system's choices more clearly. William Twining has argued for a "general jurisprudence" that takes the diversity of legal orders seriously and prepares lawyers for a world where state law coexists with international, transnational and non-state normative orders.[34] Collaboration also allows institutions to share teaching methods. The global clinical movement documented by Frank Bloch spread through networks of teachers who adapted methods to local conditions.[35]

The Commonwealth offers specific advantages for such cooperation. Many members share the doctrine of precedent, similar court structures, English as a working language of law and a body of case law that courts still cite across borders. Free legal information services, such as the Commonwealth Legal Information Institute, already make much of this case law accessible.[36] Lawyers in these systems can read each other's judgments with relatively little translation, legal or linguistic, an asset that few other groupings of states possess.

Limitations and asymmetries

The same networks that spread useful ideas also spread hierarchy. Bryant Garth and Gregory Shaffer, introducing a comparative study of the globalisation of legal education, show that reform has often been driven by elites who use foreign credentials and models to gain advantage at home, and that the resulting "global" law schools tend to treat the United States and United Kingdom as reference points.[37] Carole Silver and Swethaa Ballakrishnen show that the value of a foreign law degree varies sharply with the graduate's nationality, home market and social capital.[38] Anthea

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[28] *Bar Council of India* v. *A.K. Balaji* (2018) 5 SCC 379, paras 46-47.
[29] Bar Council of India Rules for Registration and Regulation of Foreign Lawyers and Foreign Law Firms in India, 2022 (notified on Mar. 10, 2023), as amended by notification published in the Gazette of India on May 13, 2025.
[30] University Grants Commission (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023, notified on Nov. 7, 2023, reg. 3.
[31] Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, *National Education Policy 2020*, para 20.4.
[32] David B. Wilkins, Vikramaditya S. Khanna and David M. Trubek (eds.), *The Indian Legal Profession in the Age of Globalization: The Rise of the Corporate Legal Sector and its Impact on Lawyers and Society* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017).
[33] Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen, *Accidental Feminism: Gender Parity and Selective Mobility among India's Professional Elite* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2021).
[34] William Twining, *General Jurisprudence: Understanding Law from a Global Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009).
[35] Frank S. Bloch (ed.), *The Global Clinical Movement: Educating Lawyers for Social Justice* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2011).
[36] Commonwealth Legal Information Institute (CommonLII), *available at*: https://www.commonlii.org/ (last visited on Oct. 15, 2026).
[37] Bryant Garth and Gregory Shaffer, "The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective," in Bryant G. Garth and Gregory C. Shaffer (eds.), *The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective* 3-76 (Oxford University Press, New York, 2022).
[38] Carole Silver and Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen, "International Law Student Mobility in Context: Understanding Variations in Sticky Floors, Springboards, Stairways, and Slow Escalators," in Bryant G. Garth and Gregory C. Shaffer (eds.), *The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective* 476-520 (Oxford University Press, New York, 2022); see also Carole Silver, "The Variable Value of U.S. Legal Education in the Global Legal Services Market," 24 *Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics* 1 (2011).

Roberts' study of international law across states finds that even a subject that claims universality is taught and written through national lenses, with materials from a few dominant jurisdictions travelling furthest.[39]

Resource inequalities shape participation. A school with extensive library subscriptions and travel funding can join global scholarship on different terms from a college unable to afford journal access. English-language scholarship dominates many citation networks, while work in Hindi, Swahili, Bahasa Malaysia, isiZulu and French travels less widely. Professional qualifications remain national, so comparative study may not count towards admission even when it deepens understanding. Michelle Burgis-Kasthala argues that colonial logics persist in the way "globalising" programmes position African institutions as recipients of knowledge produced elsewhere.[40] A clinical model built for small supervised groups cannot simply be copied by a college where one teacher may face well over a hundred students.

Common principles and distinct systems

Commonwealth cooperation should aim at common principles of purpose and capacity, leaving curriculum, regulation and qualification to national choice. The Australian Threshold Learning Outcomes and the English move towards outcomes-based regulation show that capacities can be described without prescribing content.[41] A principle that graduates should be able to identify, interpret and apply authoritative legal sources and explain their reasoning, can be satisfied by a five-year integrated degree in India, a four-year LLB in South Africa and a graduate JD in Canada. A principle that law schools should prepare students to understand the social effects of law can accommodate the Canadian focus on Indigenous law, the Indian focus on constitutional values and the South African focus on transformation.

This approach also accommodates the Commonwealth's growing legal diversity. Members with civil law or mixed systems, such as Mozambique, Rwanda, Cameroon, Gabon and Togo, cannot be brought into a cooperation framework built on English common law teaching. They can participate in one built on shared commitments to rigorous legal reasoning, professional ethics and the rule of law, which the Charter of the Commonwealth identifies as a common value of its members.[42] The appropriate model is a framework of mutual intelligibility, which allows systems to learn from one another without asking them to become alike.

Reimagining Law Schools, Legal Learning and Professional Competence

Preparing students for the practice of law

Graduates may move between advocacy, corporate drafting, government advice, judicial office and work outside legal practice. A degree designed around a single destination will leave many of them poorly prepared. The more useful question is which forms of knowledge and judgment travel across these roles.

The Carnegie Foundation's study of legal education in the United States offered an influential answer. It described three "apprenticeships" that legal education should provide, an intellectual apprenticeship in legal analysis, a practical apprenticeship in the skills of practice, and an apprenticeship of identity and purpose concerned with professional values.[43] The study found that American law schools did the first well and neglected the other two, an imbalance that will be familiar to many Commonwealth law teachers.

Students need doctrinal knowledge but they must also learn to locate, interpret and verify authoritative sources. They should reason from cases, distinguish precedents, interpret legislation, research and write clearly, and develop advocacy and negotiation skills. They also need to exercise ethical judgment when duties conflict. These capacities come together in practical problem-solving, which means organising facts and client objectives, identifying what the law permits and deciding which course of action is sound.

Academic education and professional training

Practitioners and judges complain that graduates struggle with drafting, court procedure and applying doctrine. Academics warn that a university reduced to vocational training would fail to develop critical understanding and would serve the public poorly.

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[39] Anthea Roberts, *Is International Law International?* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2017).

[40] Michelle Burgis-Kasthala, "The Transnationalization of Legal Education on the Periphery: Continuities and Changes in Colonial Logics for a 'Globalizing' Africa," in Bryant G. Garth and Gregory C. Shaffer (eds.), *The Globalization of Legal Education: A Critical Perspective* 123-156 (Oxford University Press, New York, 2022).

[41] Sally Kift, Mark Israel and Rachael Field, *Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project: Bachelor of Laws Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Statement* (Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Strawberry Hills, December 2010); Julian Webb, Jane Ching, Paul Maharg and Avrom Sherr, *Setting Standards: The Future of Legal Services Education and Training Regulation in England and Wales* (Legal Education and Training Review, June 2013).

[42] Charter of the Commonwealth (2013), art. VII.

[43] William M. Sullivan, Anne Colby, Judith Welch Wegner, Lloyd Bond and Lee S. Shulman, *Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2007).

Recent Indian decisions show how seriously the judiciary takes the first complaint. In May 2025 the Supreme Court restored a requirement of three years' practice at the Bar for candidates seeking entry to the judicial service as civil judges. The Court relied on reports from High Courts describing new judges who were unfamiliar with procedure and court functioning, and it concluded that two decades of recruitment without practice had not been a successful experience.[44] In August 2026 a majority of the Court modified that framework on review. For recruitment notified up to 31 March 2027, all law graduates may apply, and selected candidates must complete a year of training at a State Judicial Academy and a year of structured law clerkship, each treated as equivalent to a year of practice. For recruitment notified on or after 1 April 2027, candidates need one year of actual practice in the district courts before applying, followed by the same training and clerkship. The majority treated practical exposure and structured training as complementary.[45] It also recorded the submission of NALSAR University of Law that the mere duration of practice may be an unreliable measure of practical competence.[46] If the highest court of a large Commonwealth jurisdiction is unsure whether a law degree followed by a period at the Bar produces competence, the law schools need to be part of the answer.

That answer should not reduce the university to a vocational school. Twining's account of the English law school as "Blackstone's Tower" warned against both the isolation of academic law from practice and the capture of the curriculum by the immediate demands of the profession.[47] Duncan Kennedy's critique showed that the conventional curriculum can itself train students into professional hierarchies without examining them.[48] Modiri's argument from South Africa makes a similar point from a constitutional angle.[49] A university education in law ought to equip students to ask whether the law is just, how it works in society and how it might change.

Practical competence and critical understanding can reinforce one another. Drafting a statute makes legislative theory concrete, and representing a client in a tenancy dispute brings property law's social effects into view. Bar Council of India has resolved to include legislative drafting and plain-language drafting within the existing compulsory paper on drafting, pleading and conveyancing. The reported change adds no new paper and asks students to redraft legal texts in plain language while preserving their legal effect.[50] Whether the reform succeeds will depend on how it is taught and assessed.

Teaching methods and their limits

Lecture-based teaching and end-of-term written examinations remain the dominant model in much of the Commonwealth, particularly in large public institutions. Students can pass by memorising, they receive little feedback on writing and they rarely practice the oral, interpersonal and drafting work that legal practice requires. The South African national review identified large classes as a serious obstacle to teaching critical thinking[51] and many large public law colleges elsewhere in the Commonwealth work under comparable conditions.

Problem-based learning asks students to work through realistic legal problems in groups, learning doctrine in the course of solving them. Paul Maharg's work on simulation-based learning in Scotland showed how technology could support transactional learning in which students handle simulated files and clients.[52] Interdisciplinary courses help students understand the economic, social and political contexts in which legal problems arise. Experiential learning, including clinics, externships and simulations, gives students supervised responsibility for real or realistic legal work. Each of these methods has a place within doctrinal courses and need not be confined to separate electives.

The practical constraints of reform

Curricular reform is easy to recommend and hard to carry out. Many law teachers in the Commonwealth were themselves taught through lectures and have little training in alternative or practice-based methods and faculty development requires time, funding and institutional recognition. Small-group teaching, clinical supervision and simulation are labour-intensive and therefore expensive. Margaret Thornton's study of the Australian experience

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[44] *All India Judges Association* v. *Union of India*, I.A. No. 93974 of 2019 in W.P. (C) No. 1022 of 1989, 2025 INSC 735, decided on May 20, 2025, paras 64, 69, 71-72, 81-83 and 89.

[45] *Bhumika Trust* v. *Union of India*, W.P. (C) No. 1110 of 2025 (with Review Petitions in W.P. (C) No. 1022 of 1989), decided on Aug. 21, 2026, 2026 LiveLaw (SC) 841, paras 48, 54, 66-67 and 73-74 (majority opinion; K. Vinod Chandran J. dissenting).

[46] *Ibid.*, para 41.

[47] William Twining, *Blackstone's Tower: The English Law School* (Hamlyn Lectures) (Sweet & Maxwell, London, 1994).

[48] Duncan Kennedy, "Legal Education and the Reproduction of Hierarchy" 32 *Journal of Legal Education* 591 (1982).

[49] Joel M. Modiri, "The Crises in Legal Education," 46(3) *Acta Academica* 1 (2014).

[50] "BCI Reforms Legal Education: Legislative and Plain Language Drafting Now Part of LL.B. Curriculum," *SCC Times* (Dec. 16, 2025), *available at:* https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2025/12/16/bci-announced-integration-drafting-legislation-plain-language-paper-21/ (last visited on Oct. 16, 2026), reporting a resolution of the General Council of the Bar Council of India concerning Paper 21 (Drafting, Pleading and Conveyancing) under Schedule II, Part II(B) of the Rules of Legal Education, 2008.

[51] Council on Higher Education, *The State of the Provision of the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Qualification in South Africa* (CHE, Pretoria, November 2018).

[52] Paul Maharg, *Transforming Legal Education: Learning and Teaching the Law in the Early Twenty-first Century* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007).

shows how financial pressure on public universities has pushed law schools towards large classes and cost recovery, even in a wealthy jurisdiction.[53] Systems with very large numbers of law students cannot move to an intensive model overnight and reforms designed for elite institutions may be unworkable elsewhere.

Reform should be staged. Structured problem exercises, peer assessment and short written assignments with targeted feedback can work in large classes. More intensive teaching can be concentrated in drafting, advocacy and client work. Regulators should assess a law school's staffing and resources alongside its syllabus.

Technology, Legal Knowledge and the Future of Legal Learning

Changed conditions of legal work

Richard Susskind has long argued that technology would restructure legal work and create new roles for lawyers.[54] Students and practitioners now have tools that can summarise judgments, draft documents and propose answers to legal questions in seconds. For legal education the important question is what these tools change about the competence a lawyer needs.

Commonwealth courts have already given a clear answer about responsibility. In June 2025 a Divisional Court in England and Wales, in *R (Ayinde)* v. *London Borough of Haringey*, dealt with filings that cited non-existent cases. The court stated that freely available generative AI tools "are not capable of conducting reliable legal research", that lawyers have a professional duty to check the accuracy of such research against authoritative sources, and that a lawyer cannot rely on a lay client for the accuracy of citations.[55] The court also called on those with leadership responsibilities in the profession and its regulators to take practical and effective measures, and it said that guidance on its own was insufficient.[56] In Canada, the Supreme Court of British Columbia ordered counsel to pay costs personally after a notice of application relied on cases invented by ChatGPT.[57]

Indian courts have spoken in similar terms. In 2023 the Delhi High Court held that ChatGPT responses cannot be the basis of adjudication of legal or factual issues, observing that the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated data remained in a grey area and that AI cannot substitute for human intelligence in the adjudicatory process.[58] In July 2025 the High Court of Kerala adopted a policy for its district judiciary that prohibits the use of AI tools to arrive at findings, reliefs, orders or judgments and requires judicial officers to verify AI-assisted output.[59] The Supreme Court of Singapore issued a guide in 2024 that makes court users fully responsible for the content of their documents, and the Supreme Court of New South Wales issued a practice note restricting the use of generative AI in affidavits, witness statements and expert reports.[60] Judicial practice across the Commonwealth thus points to the same principle. Technology can assist, but the lawyer remains accountable for every authority cited and every proposition advanced.

Implications for legal learning

These developments make source verification an important professional skill. Lawyers must check whether a case exists, whether it supports the proposition attributed to it and whether it remains good law. They must interpret statutes in context and exercise judgment that cannot be delegated to a machine. Students who rely on generated answers before learning to reason independently risk weakening the very skills they need to assess those answers.

Law schools should teach students to use legal technologies with an understanding of their limits and the duties that govern their work. Teaching can include how generative systems produce errors, exercises checking output against primary sources and discussion of confidentiality and data protection. Students should also demonstrate that they can research and reason without these tools. Part I examines what this means for academic integrity and assessment, and Part IV for research and scholarship.

Assessment needs to reflect these changes. Take-home essays alone may not show an individual student's reasoning. Supervised writing, oral examinations, staged assignments, presentations and exercises requiring students to correct or critique generated answers can provide a clearer picture, although they carry workload and cost implications that

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[53] Margaret Thornton, *Privatising the Public University: The Case of Law* (Routledge, Abingdon, 2012).
[54] Richard Susskind, *Tomorrow's Lawyers: An Introduction to your Future* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 3rd edn., 2023).
[55] *R (Ayinde)* v. *London Borough of Haringey* [2025] EWHC 1383 (Admin), paras 6-7 and 81.
[56] *Ibid.*, paras 9 and 82.
[57] *Zhang* v. *Chen*, 2024 BCSC 285.
[58] *Christian Louboutin SAS* v. *M/s The Shoe Boutique - Shutiq*, CS (COMM) 583 of 2023, decided on Aug. 22, 2023 (Delhi High Court), para 28.
[59] High Court of Kerala, *Policy Regarding Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in District Judiciary*, Official Memorandum No. HCKL/7490/2025-DI-3-HC (July 19, 2025), cls. 4.3, 4.6 and 4.8.
[60] Supreme Court of Singapore, Registrar's Circular No. 1 of 2024, *Guide on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools by Court Users* (Sept. 23, 2024), paras 3(3) and 5(1); Supreme Court of New South Wales, Practice Note SC Gen 23, *Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI)* (Jan. 28, 2025, effective Feb. 3, 2025).

affect institutions unevenly. Access is uneven as well. Commercial research platforms and AI tools are expensive and free legal information institutes are an important corrective for schools that cannot afford them.[61]

Legal Education, Professional Responsibility and the Public Purpose of Law Schools

The social role of lawyers

Legal education is a public matter because lawyers hold a public trust with privileged access to courts and influence over how legal rights are used. In many Commonwealth jurisdictions, constitutional commitments make this public role explicit. Article 39A of the Constitution of India directs the state to ensure that the legal system promotes justice on the basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid.[62] Lawyers who do not understand how the law affects people without power will practise in ways that reproduce inequality, often without noticing.

Clinical and experiential learning as a source of professional judgment

Clinics matter because they teach judgment. Students meet problems that do not arrive divided by syllabus topic, learn to identify a client's needs, explain the law plainly and act within ethical limits, and see the delays, costs and informal rules that shape legal processes. Supervised reflection turns this experience into learning.

India has a statutory basis for such work. The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 established a national system of legal services, and the National Legal Services Authority's regulations on legal aid clinics provide for clinics in law colleges and universities.[63] Menon's early work on clinical legal education in India linked it directly to the goals of socially relevant legal education.[64] In many institutions, however, clinics remain under-resourced and peripheral, staffed by students with limited supervision. Part III considers how clinical method can be carried into the core subjects, and Part V how the law-school legal aid clinic itself can be reformulated.

Communication, language and access

The ability to communicate law to people who are not lawyers is a professional competence that legal education has long neglected. Legal documents in many Commonwealth systems are written in a dense and archaic style that clients and even officials struggle to understand. In multilingual societies the problem is compounded because the language of the court, the language of the client and the language of the law may differ. The National Education Policy's call for bilingual legal education recognises this problem in India.[65] The Bar Council's reported 2025 decision on plain language drafting would go further by making the redrafting of legal texts in plain language part of a compulsory paper.[66] A lawyer who cannot explain advice to a client has not fully given it. Part II returns to questions of language and translation in the context of citation.

Learning after admission

No degree can prepare a lawyer for a whole career in which law and technology keep changing, so continuing professional learning is part of legal education. Some jurisdictions require a minimum number of hours, while others, including England and Wales, require practitioners to maintain their own competence and keep their knowledge up to date.[67] Law schools can act as partners in this learning through short courses and research-based training on new areas of law and a Commonwealth framework could encourage the sharing of such materials across jurisdictions. Part V develops this partnership in the setting of the law-school clinic.

Towards a Commonwealth Framework for Legal Education

A Commonwealth framework should describe shared capacities and values, leave curricula and qualification rules to national choice and support joint work on problems such as technology and cross-border practice. Its central design challenge is unequal resources because without measures to address that inequality cooperation will favour institutions that already have the most capacity.

India offers experience of building national law universities at scale, a statutory legal aid system with a place for law school clinics and current experiments in plain language drafting. South Africa offers a hard-won understanding of how legal education relates to transformation and of how to review a national system honestly. Canada offers an example of curriculum reform in response to a national history of injustice. Australia offers outcome statements that

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[61] Commonwealth Legal Information Institute (CommonLII), *available at:* https://www.commonlii.org/ (last visited on Oct. 16, 2026).
[62] The Constitution of India, art. 39A.
[63] The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 (Act 39 of 1987); National Legal Services Authority (Legal Aid Clinics) Regulations, 2011 (notified on Aug. 10, 2011), regs. 22 and 24.
[64] N.R. Madhava Menon (ed.), *Clinical Legal Education* (Eastern Book Company, Lucknow, 1998).
[65] *Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, National Education Policy 2020, para. 20.4.*
[66] "BCI Reforms Legal Education: Legislative and Plain Language Drafting Now Part of LL.B. Curriculum," SCC Times (Dec. 16, 2025), *available at:* https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2025/12/16/bci-announced-integration-drafting-legislation-plain-language-paper-21/ (last visited on Oct. 16, 2026).
[67] Solicitors Regulation Authority, *SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs* (2019), para 3.3.

describe capacities without prescribing content. England and Wales offer evidence, positive and negative from a radical change in the route to qualification. Malaysia offers experience of managing the recognition of foreign degrees. Kenya offers experience of a separate professional school as the bridge between the degree and practice.[68] Such lessons travel best among peers with similar constraints, as well as between richer and poorer systems.

Reimagining Legal Education for a Commonwealth in Transition

The future of Commonwealth legal education will be shaped chiefly by national law schools, regulators, courts and governments. Cooperation can strengthen existing efforts without requiring countries to follow a single model. The history discussed here suggests that shared goals and practical arrangements offer a more useful basis for cooperation. Legal education must continue to develop students' ability to reason from authoritative sources, exercise independent professional judgment and serve the administration of justice. The growing use of generative AI makes it all the more important to teach these skills.

The inherited separation between academic study and professional training has left a gap that courts and regulators are now trying to fill after graduation, as the Indian judicial service cases show. Law schools can narrow it by integrating practical exercises and critical reflection into core subjects, with reform designed for large classes and limited resources. Professional bodies can keep adding examinations after graduation or they can work with universities to improve the degree itself. The latter offers a stronger route to competence when it is adequately funded. Knowledge should also move in more than one direction, with poorer institutions taking part in exchange as partners and contributors. Legal education can respond to changing professional demands while preserving the diversity of Commonwealth legal systems. Cooperation will be most useful when it helps jurisdictions learn from one another without dictating how they must teach or regulate law.

Questions for Deliberation across the Conference

The following questions are not confined to any one session. They are offered for all five Technical Sessions and for the Plenary Session's discussion of a blueprint on legal education.

- What minimum shared capacities, as distinct from shared curricula, should a Commonwealth framework describe for a law graduate, and how can such a framework include members with civil law, mixed and customary legal systems?
- How should responsibility for practical competence be divided between law schools, professional regulators and courts, in light of recent decisions on entry to the judicial service and changing routes to qualification?
- Which reforms are realistic for large public law colleges with high student-teacher ratios, and should regulators assess staffing and resources alongside the syllabus?
- How can Commonwealth exchange be made genuinely two-way, so that institutions with fewer resources take part as partners and contributors?
- What should every law graduate be able to do without technological assistance, and how should law schools certify it?

This background paper consolidates thematic research prepared for the Conference by Ms. Afreen Afshar Alam (the main body of the Introduction), Ms. Anvesha Chaturvedi (Part I), Mr. Avadhesh Deo Pandey (Part II), Ms. Shilpi Jain (Part III), Ms. Sheenam Thakur (Part IV) and Mr. Sharyaurai Riang (Part V), with the opening sections of the Introduction, the connecting passages and the concluding Part prepared for this consolidated edition.

PART I - TECHNOLOGICAL OVERREACH AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Technical Session II · 21 November 2026 · 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

> *The Introduction closed on the point that generative AI makes the teaching of independent legal reasoning more important. A law school can certify that reasoning only if its assessments can see it. When a tool can draft, outline and argue with little help from the student, the take-home essay no longer shows what the student knows. Part I takes up this pressure point: where legitimate technological assistance ends and technological overreach begins, why detection software cannot answer the question, and how fair procedure and assessment redesign can protect academic integrity without discouraging useful innovation.*

[68] The Legal Education Act, 2012 (Act No. 27 of 2012) (Kenya); the Kenya School of Law Act, 2012 (Act No. 26 of 2012) (Kenya).

Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence has shifted the question facing law schools from whether students will use technology in their work to how that use can be recognised, regulated and, where necessary, restrained. Academic integrity is the point at which this shift is felt most sharply, because assessment rests on a simple assumption: the work a

student submits shows what that student knows and can do. When a tool can draft, outline and reason with very little help from the student, a take-home essay or a dissertation no longer proves that assumption. Universities therefore face a problem of trust. Written work may be produced or heavily shaped by a tool, and it is hard to tell, which risks devaluing the degrees they award.[69] The central questions are therefore where legitimate technological assistance ends and technological overreach begins, how existing rules and detection tools respond to it, and what institutions can do through fair procedures and assessment design to protect integrity without discouraging useful innovation.

Clear definitions are needed before this problem can be discussed. Academic integrity is a commitment to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.[70] Legitimate technological assistance refers to the open and permitted use of tools for limited purposes, such as proofreading or idea generation. A survey of university teachers found that these are generally regarded as acceptable uses.[71] Technological overreach, as used in this Part, means the use of technological help beyond what the assessment, the institution or the profession can legitimately accept. It is not a fixed line. Whether a particular use amounts to overreach depends on three things: the learning outcome being assessed, the rules announced in advance, and how openly the student has declared the use.

Legal education is a particularly sensitive case. Law schools do more than award degrees. They are the gateway to a regulated profession and must certify people who will protect the rights of clients, uphold the rule of law and maintain public confidence in the administration of justice. These tools do not understand the law. They can produce believable but fabricated information and cannot be relied on to cite accurately.[72] Heavy reliance on such tools also risks a loss of originality and a decline in essential skills, a concern raised by every student in one law school focus group.[73] Law schools therefore need to keep a clear line between what a machine can produce and the human legal reasoning that a student must be able to show.

The Existing Regulatory and Policy Framework

Academic integrity has traditionally been governed by rules designed to catch the copying of existing text. In India, the main instrument is the University Grants Commission's regulations of 2018 on academic integrity and the prevention of plagiarism. They define academic integrity as honesty in proposing, carrying out and reporting any work that creates intellectual property, and plagiarism as taking another person's work or idea and presenting it as one's own. Institutions must check theses, dissertations, publications and similar documents with plagiarism-detection software when they are submitted. Plagiarism is graded in four levels according to the percentage of similarity: up to 10 per cent attracts no penalty, and the levels above 10, 40 and 60 per cent carry increasing penalties. The check does not count quotations with proper attribution, references, bibliographies, generic terms, laws, standard equations or coincidental terms of up to 14 consecutive words. Allegations are heard by a departmental panel and an institutional panel. Both must follow the principles of natural justice, and each has 45 days to complete its work. The penalties range from revision of the work and debarment to cancellation of registration or denial of annual increments.[74]

These Regulations are not a code on artificial intelligence. Their text does not mention generative artificial intelligence, large language models or machine-generated text. They also do not require students to disclose the use of AI, to keep a record of their prompts or to verify machine output. The Regulations define a "script" to cover research papers, theses, dissertations, chapters in books and full-length books, and they expressly exclude assignments, term papers, project reports, coursework, essays and answer scripts. The penalties are also framed for students at Master's and research level. Much of the concern about AI misuse arises in exactly the kind of work that the Regulations leave out.[75] This gap matters because similarity software looks for matches with existing text. In one study reported in the literature, 40 of 50 essays written by ChatGPT were rated highly original by text-matching software.[76]

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[69] Debby R. E. Cotton, Peter A. Cotton, et al., "Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT" 61:2 *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* 228-230 (2024).

[70] International Center for Academic Integrity, *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* 4 (ICAI, 3rd edn., 2021), available at: www.academicintegrity.org/the-fundamental-values-of-academic-integrity (last visited on October 18, 2026).

[71] Chekfoung Tan, Muna M. Alhammad, et al., Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Use of Generative AI in Summative Assessments at Higher Education Institutions: An Exploratory Study 17, *UKAIS Conference Proceedings* (2024), available at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/ukais2024/19 (last visited on October 18, 2026).

[72] Pascale Lorber, "Generative AI, law schools and assessment: where next?" 59 *The Law Teacher* 375-376 (2025).

[73] Söğüt Atilla-Aydın and Laura Lammasniemi, "Preparing guidelines for generative AI in law schools: student perspectives and educational implications" 60 *The Law Teacher* 192 (2026).

[74] University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 (F. 1-18/2010 (CPP-II), The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, Sec. 4, No. 287, July 31, 2018), regs. 2(a), 2(l), 6(a), 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

[75] University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 (F. 1-18/2010 (CPP-II), The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, Sec. 4, No. 287, July 31, 2018), regs. 2(a), 2(l), 2(o) and 12.

[76] Debora Weber-Wulff, Alla Anohina-Naumeca, et al., "Testing of detection tools for AI-generated text" 19:26 *International Journal for Educational Integrity* 6 (2023).

International guidance is broader but not binding. The UNESCO guidance of 2023 on generative AI in education calls for a human-centred approach that protects human agency. It asks governments to regulate the use of these tools, to protect data privacy and to consider an age limit for their use, and it stresses that educational institutions need to validate such systems for their ethical and pedagogical appropriateness.[77] The UNESCO competency framework for teachers of 2024 sets out progressive levels of skill meant to build AI literacy and ethical awareness among teachers.[78] These documents do not provide disciplinary rules, a standard definition of misconduct, or a standard of evidence for proving that a student has handed work over to a machine.

The result is that rules differ from one institution to another. A study of the published policies of the top 100 universities in the United States found that none had banned generative AI completely. In

54.8 per cent of cases the decision was left to individual instructors, 35.6 per cent were undecided or unclear, and 9.6 per cent allowed use under conditions set by the university. In such a system, the same student practice may be accepted in one module and punished as serious misconduct in another.[79]

Detection Tools, Evidence and Fairness

Faced with these difficulties, many institutions have turned to software that claims to detect AI-written text. Testing suggests that these tools are unreliable, can be biased against some writers, and create risks for fair procedure.

A 2023 test examined 14 detection tools: 12 publicly available tools and two commercial systems, Turnitin and Plagiarism Check. The test used English documents that were human-written, human-written in another language and then machine-translated, generated by AI, generated by AI and edited by a person, and generated by AI and then reworded with a paraphrasing tool. Across 756 tests, the authors concluded that no tool reached 80 per cent accuracy and only five scored above 70 per cent. Accuracy fell sharply when the text was changed even slightly. For unedited AI text, the average accuracy ranged from 63 to 77 per cent, depending on how the results were scored. For AI text edited by a person, it fell to between 30 and 45 per cent, and for paraphrased text to between 15 and 31 per cent. The tools also wrongly flagged human writing, at rates from 0 per cent for half of the tools, including Turnitin, to 50 per cent for GPT Zero. They often missed AI text that had been edited or paraphrased: on average, 51.6 per cent of manually edited texts and 71.4 per cent of paraphrased texts went undetected. These tests were carried out between March and May 2023 and do not describe every tool in use today. They nevertheless show how weak a probability-based method can be.[80]

A second 2023 study shows a further problem. It tested seven widely used detectors on 91 essays written by non-native English speakers for the TOEFL examination and on 88 essays written by students in the eighth grade in the United States. The detectors were almost perfectly accurate on the American essays, with an average error of 5.19 per cent. They wrongly labelled, on average, 61.22 per cent of the TOEFL essays as AI-generated. All seven detectors labelled 18 of the 91 essays as AI-written, and 89 of the 91 were labelled as AI-written by at least one detector. The authors link this to perplexity, a measure of how predictable the words are. The essays flagged by all detectors had significantly lower perplexity, which suggests that the detectors may penalise writers with a limited range of expression. This matters across the Commonwealth, where a large number of students and scholars write in English as an additional language. The authors strongly caution against using such detectors in evaluative or educational settings, particularly where the work of non-native English speakers is assessed.[81]

A systematic review of 104 studies from 39 countries, based on a search carried out in January 2025, reaches similar conclusions. It reports that the literature consistently cautions against relying on detection tools because of doubts about their accuracy and the lack of supporting evidence, that they are vulnerable to paraphrasing, and that they may wrongly flag text written by non-native English speakers. Unlike a plagiarism checker such as Turnitin, an AI detector generally gives no evidence to support its assessment, so the result is hard to verify. The review concludes that detectors should be used only as supplementary indicators, not as evidence of misconduct.[82]

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[77] UNESCO, *Guidance for generative AI in education and research* 3 (UNESCO, 2023), available at: https://doi.org/10.54675/EWZM9535 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[78] UNESCO, *AI competency framework for teachers* 3 (UNESCO, 2024), available at: https://doi.org/10.54675/ZJTE2084 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[79] Hui Wang, Anh Dang, et al., "Generative AI in Higher Education: Seeing ChatGPT Through Universities' Policies, Resources, and Guidelines" 7 *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence (2024),* available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666920X24001292 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[80] Debora Weber-Wulff, Alla Anohina-Naumeca, et al., "Testing of detection tools for AI-generated text" 19:26 *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 10-25 (2023).
[81] Weixin Liang, Mert Yuksekgonul, et al., "GPT detectors are biased against non-native English writers" 4(7) Patterns 100779, 2-3 (2023), available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666389923001307 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[82] Batool Hendal and Gobinda Chowdhury, "Navigating Academic Integrity in the Era of Generative AI: A Systematic Literature Review" 6:572 *AI and Ethics* 3-13 (2026).

This difference is important for fair procedure. As noted above, the panels under the Regulations of 2018 must follow the principles of natural justice. Natural justice requires that the student can see the evidence, understand the basis of the allegation and answer it. A probability score cannot be inspected or tested in the way a matched source can. Using it alone as proof is therefore difficult to reconcile with a fair procedure and risks a wrongful finding of misconduct.

Honour Codes, Fair Procedure and Institutional Approaches

Honour codes and integrity policies need shared values to rest on. The International Center for Academic Integrity describes six such values and what each requires in practice. Honesty includes being truthful and giving credit to the owner of the work. Trust grows in institutions that set clear and consistent standards and apply them fairly. Fairness means communicating expectations clearly and responding to dishonesty consistently and impartially. Respect means valuing the views and efforts of others. Responsibility means that every member of the community is accountable for safeguarding integrity. Courage means acting on one's values even when this is difficult. In relation to new technology, values of this kind can guide ethical choices as well as punish breaches.[83]

Recent studies show how institutions have responded. A 2026 survey of the top 200 universities in the world found that 180 of them, or 90 per cent, had published guidelines on generative AI, and all of these allowed its use on conditions. The guidelines commonly dealt with academic integrity (93 per cent), data privacy (85 per cent), verification of AI output (79 per cent) and citation of AI use (69 per cent). Far fewer dealt with practical enforcement, such as requiring users to document their prompts (38 per cent), explaining how the tools work (19 per cent) or providing a formal way to report problems (18 per cent).[84] The systematic review mentioned earlier reports that most studies advocate revising institutional policies to make them clear, robust, dynamic and flexible, while only a small number favour restrictive approaches such as AI-resistant assessment or a ban on generative AI during examinations.[85]

Three approaches can be seen in these studies. The first is prohibition by default. The use of generative AI is generally not allowed unless an instructor explicitly permits it.[86] The second is permission with disclosure. Students may use AI for limited purposes, but they must declare it, give a short account of how they used it and are encouraged to keep records such as screenshots of their prompts. The guidelines of Warwick Law School for supervised research projects follow this model.

They allow uses such as asking the tool to check one's understanding, to suggest an outline from the student's own points or to check grammar and flow, and they prohibit asking it to generate the project or its ideas and arguments from scratch.[87] The third is to classify each assessment. A traffic-light system used at the University of Leicester prohibits AI use in red assessments, permits AI help at the developmental stage in amber assessments, where the output must remain the student's own work, and requires students to integrate AI into their work in green assessments.[88]

The studies also point to safeguards that make the handling of alleged misconduct fair. First, rules should be clear and communicated well before the deadline, so that students know what is expected. Teachers surveyed in one study asked for a standard institutional guideline on the use of generative AI across the sector.[89] Second, as noted above, a detection score should not be treated as the only or final proof of dishonesty. Third, the panels under the Regulations of 2018 must follow natural justice, which includes the right to be heard, to see the evidence against the student and to answer it.[90] Fourth, interactive oral components can help a teacher judge whether the student really understands the work.[91]

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[83] International Center for Academic Integrity, *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* 4-10 (ICAI, 3rd edn., 2021), available at: www.academicintegrity.org/the-fundamental-values-of-academic-integrity (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[84] Midrar Ullah and Maged N. Kamel Boulos, "Assessing Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools Usage Guidelines at the Top 200 Universities Worldwide" 18,492 *Future Internet* (2026).
[85] Batool Hendal and Gobinda Chowdhury, "Navigating academic integrity in the era of generative AI: a systematic literature review" 6:572 *AI and Ethics* 13 (2026).
[86] Midrar Ullah and Maged N. Kamel Boulos, "Assessing Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools Usage Guidelines at the Top 200 Universities Worldwide" 18,492 *Future Internet* (2026).
[87] Söğüt Atilla-Aydın and Laura Lammasniemi, "Preparing guidelines for generative AI in law schools: student perspectives and educational implications" 60 *The Law Teacher* 196-197 (2026).
[88] Pascale Lorber, "Generative AI, law schools and assessment: where next?" 59(3) *The Law Teacher* 386 (2025).
[89] Chekfoung Tan, Muna M. Alhammad, et al., Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Use of Generative AI in Summative Assessments at Higher Education Institutions: An Exploratory Study 17, *UKAIS Conference Proceedings* (2024), available at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/ukais2024/19 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[90] University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 (F. 1-18/2010 (CPP-II), The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, Sec. 4, No. 287, July 31, 2018), regs. 10(ii) and 11(iv).
[91] Jason M. Lodge, Sarah Howard, Margaret Bearman, Phillip Dawson, et al., Assessment Reform for the Age of Artificial Intelligence 4-6 (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2023).

Assessment Redesign, Capacity and Student Realities

Responding to the problem requires more than surveillance. Assessment itself needs to be redesigned. A discussion paper commissioned by the Australian regulator TEQSA proposes an approach that works at the level of a whole programme and gives weight to the process of learning, not only to the final product. When students show how they made their decisions, for example by revealing dead ends, explaining their prompts or reflecting on feedback from peers, teachers and AI, their own thinking becomes visible in a way that AI is less able to simulate. These methods have limits. Security of the kind needed to limit the use of AI takes a great deal of resources and cannot be applied to every assessment. The paper therefore suggests that institutions secure the key points at which students progress and complete their programme.[92]

In legal education, AI makes the lower levels of learning, such as remembering, understanding and applying, essentially a given. It has been argued that assessment will therefore have to focus on higher-order abilities such as analysing, evaluating and applying legal principles creatively.[93] Suitable tasks include asking students to critique a text drafted by AI and teaching them to verify AI output, which is a key skill. Oral examinations are also possible, although they are resource intensive.[94]

Teaching staff and students also need support. UNESCO notes that, as late as 2022, only seven countries had developed national programmes to train teachers in AI. Its framework for teachers defines 15 competencies across five dimensions: a human-centred mindset, ethics of AI, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy and AI for professional learning.[95] Its framework for students defines 12 competencies across four dimensions and three levels of progression: understand, apply and create.[96] Teachers need clear institutional guidance and training. In a survey of university teachers, respondents called for clear leadership and guidance for staff, including training in the use of generative AI. If teachers are unsure what is permitted, students cannot be expected to follow the rules.[97]

It is equally important to understand why students use generative AI. Students often turn to it when they are overwhelmed by heavy course work, outside obligations or language difficulties. It would be wrong to assume that all misuse is a simple moral failing. Understanding these motives does not mean that standards should be lowered or workload lightened, but it should shape how rules and support are designed.[98] In one focus group, students whose first language was not English used the tools as an accessible proofreader to check the tone, flow and grammar of their writing.[99]

Finally, findings from one setting should not be applied everywhere without care. A study at Warwick Law School involved a focus group of six students who volunteered to take part, had a high level of familiarity with AI tools and studied at a university that admits students with high academic credentials. The authors themselves note that these students saw AI as a supplementary aid, which may reflect their confidence in handling academic tasks independently, and that the findings might not capture the experience of students who struggle with academic skills. The results cannot simply be applied to wider groups of students, to non-native English writers or to law students in India, whose social, economic, linguistic and institutional circumstances are different. Policies in Commonwealth countries should be fitted to local students and local capacity and should not copy assumptions from elsewhere.[100]

The Way Forward

The material discussed above suggests that legal faculties cannot protect academic integrity through punitive surveillance or blanket bans alone. A balanced approach rests on four principles. The first is clarity. Faculties should state, for each assignment, which technological uses are permitted and which are not, and should do so before the deadline, within a clear institutional framework. The second is transparency. Legitimate assistance should be declared openly through a short statement, a record of prompts and verified citations. The third is proportion in the use of evidence. Because detection software is unreliable and can be biased, a detection score should never be the only basis

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[92] *Ibid.*
[93] Stuart Hargreaves, "A response to Lorber: Do students need an AI toolkit?" 59 *The Law Teacher* 397 (2025).
[94] Pascale Lorber, "Generative AI, law schools and assessment: where next?" 59 *The Law Teacher* 382-388 (2025).
[95] UNESCO, *AI competency framework for teachers* 3 (UNESCO, 2024), available at: https://doi.org/10.54675/ZJTE2084 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[96] UNESCO, *AI competency framework for students* 3 (UNESCO, 2024), available at: https://doi.org/10.54675/JKJB9835 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[97] Chekfoung Tan, Muna M. Alhammad, et al., Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Use of Generative AI in Summative Assessments at Higher Education Institutions: An Exploratory Study 17, *UKAIS Conference Proceedings* (2024), available at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/ukais2024/19 (last visited on October 18, 2026).
[98] Stuart Hargreaves, "A response to Lorber: Do students need an AI toolkit?" 59 *The Law Teacher* 391 (2025).
[99] Söğüt Atilla-Aydın and Laura Lammasniemi, "Preparing guidelines for generative AI in law schools: student perspectives and educational implications" 60 *The Law Teacher* 190 (2026).
[100] *Id.,* at 188-189.

for a finding of misconduct. It should be supported by human inquiry, such as a conversation or an oral examination, in line with natural justice. The fourth is capacity. Staff need training to design assessments that are hard to misuse, and students need to learn to use AI critically and responsibly.

These principles fit the purpose of this Conference and its contribution to the Hyderabad Statement on the Future of Commonwealth Legal Education, 2026. Commonwealth legal education spans many constitutional, social and legal traditions across Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Pacific.

The aim is therefore not to impose a single model on law schools. It is to offer a flexible, shared baseline that each institution can apply within its own legal framework, as Indian institutions can within the Regulations of 2018, while balancing technological innovation with academic integrity and respecting local conditions.

Generative artificial intelligence presents legal education with a real choice between relying on fragile technological surveillance and carrying out reform of assessment and policy. As machines become better at routine drafting and research, law schools must protect the integrity of legal qualifications by testing human reasoning, judgement and professional ethics. This is a professional duty and not only a matter of discipline, because law schools certify the people who will serve the justice system. Clear rules, open declaration, proportionate evidence and sustained capacity building will allow Commonwealth law schools to benefit from new technology without losing the values on which legal education rests. The following questions are proposed for discussion.

- Where should law schools draw the line between legitimate technological assistance and academic misconduct, and who should decide it for each assessment?
- What standard of evidence and procedure should disciplinary panels follow, given that AI detectors are unreliable and can be biased against non-native English writers?
- How can assessments be redesigned to show a student's own legal reasoning without placing an unsustainable burden on teachers?
- What common Commonwealth principles on disclosure of AI use and faculty training can be agreed, while respecting differences between jurisdictions?
- How should law schools respond to the pressure of time, workload and anxiety that push students towards unauthorised use of AI, instead of treating all misuse as a moral failing?

Conclusion

The difficulty with technological overreach lies less in the tools themselves than in the absence of clear boundaries for their use, and detection software cannot supply those boundaries because it is unreliable and can wrongly penalise some writers. Integrity is better served when institutions state their rules plainly, expect students to declare how they have used AI, follow a fair procedure when misconduct is alleged, and design assessments that bring a student's own legal reasoning into view. Since law schools prepare those who will later serve the justice system, the standards they set for honest work carry weight well beyond the classroom.

PART II - UNIFORM CITATION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Technical Session I · 21 November 2026 · 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

> *The integrity of a student's work depends, in turn, on the integrity of the sources it relies on. Every legal argument rests on the reader's ability to find and trust its authorities. That ability is now threatened from two sides: by citation practices that differ from one jurisdiction and journal to the next, and by AI tools that produce references which look correct but point to nothing. Part II asks whether the Commonwealth can agree on a uniform approach to citation. It treats citation as part of the shared infrastructure of cooperation described in the Introduction.*

Introduction

Every citation is a small promise. When a writer cites a judgment, a statute or an article, the writer tells the reader that the source exists, that it can be found, and that it supports the point being made. Legal reasoning depends on this promise at every step, because a lawyer, judge or a scholar who cannot trust a reference cannot trust the argument built upon it. Citation is therefore not a matter of decoration or personal taste. It belongs to the working machinery of the legal system, alongside court registries and law reports.[101]

[101] Neil Duxbury, *The Nature and Authority of Precedent* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). On the reliance of the common law on identifiable and retrievable authority.

The Commonwealth offers a striking example of shared law and divided habits. Its legal systems grew from a common law inheritance, and courts in one jurisdiction regularly read, discuss and sometimes follow decisions from another.[102]

The CLEA 1st Annual International Conference on Legal Education, 2026 names the absence of a uniform Commonwealth citation standard as a continuing complication for scholarship, judicial writing, publishing and cross-jurisdictional legal exchange. It also asks a colloquium of judges, senior academicians, Vice-Chancellors and Professors to consider a shared standard, the practical barriers to harmonisation, and a possible consensus framework or roadmap for adoption by law schools and journals.

A word on the meaning of 'uniform' is needed at the outset. Globalising legal education does not mean convergence towards a single jurisdictional model; it means creating opportunities for exchange and identifying areas where shared principles and good practice can emerge. The same caution applies to citation. Uniformity may mean one rulebook that every writer follows to the letter. It may instead mean a common core of principles, a shared vocabulary and dependable translation between systems.

What Citation Does

Before asking whether citation should be uniform, it helps to ask what citation is for. Six functions can be distinguished, and each points towards a different kind of agreement.

Identification. The first task of a citation is to tell the reader which document is meant. A case name alone is not enough, since many cases share names and many judgments exist in several versions. A year, a court and a report series or a unique number fix the document. This function is largely factual, and agreement on it is the easiest to reach.

Retrieval. A good citation lets the reader find the source quickly. In the age of printed reports this meant a volume and a page. In the digital age it means a stable identifier that a database can resolve.

Verification. Citation allows a sceptical reader to check the claim. This function has gained new weight with the arrival of generative artificial intelligence, which can produce references that look correct but point to nothing. A citation format that is easy to verify against an authoritative source is a form of protection.

Attribution. In scholarship, citation also records debt. It tells the reader whose ideas are being used and distinguishes the writer's contribution from borrowed material. Academic integrity rests on this function, and it is the one most closely tied to the conference's concern with integrity and authorship.

Signalling authority. A citation tells the reader something about the weight of the source: the level of the court, whether the report is authorised, whether the decision is reported or unreported, and whether the author is a judge, a practitioner or a scholar. Conventions on court identifiers and report hierarchy exist largely for this purpose.

Socialisation. Finally, learning to cite is part of learning to be a lawyer. Students absorb habits of accuracy, deference to sources and attention to detail through the discipline of the footnote. Some critics have argued that legal writing has taken footnoting too far and that the practice can become an end in itself.[103] That criticism deserves a hearing in any discussion of uniformity, because a standard that is too heavy can burden writers without helping readers.

The Present Landscape

Law reports and the question of authority

The Commonwealth citation tradition began with the law report. In England and Wales, the Law Reports series published by the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting came to be regarded as the authorised version of judgments, and courts have long expressed a preference for citing it where available.[104] Other jurisdictions developed their own series. In India, for example, decisions are routinely cited to several private reports at once, such as *Supreme Court Cases*, *All India Reporter* and *Supreme Court Reports*, so that *Kesavananda Bharati* v *State of Kerala* appears as (1973) 4 SCC 225 and as AIR 1973 SC 1461.[105] Neither form is wrong, but a reader unfamiliar with these series may not know how they relate or which carries more authority.

The central difficulty here is not that reports differ. It is that, in many jurisdictions, no single report has the status of an official text. Where private publishers decide which cases are reported, how headnotes are written and how pages are numbered, a citation becomes tied to a commercial product. This matters for access, for cost and for the stability of pinpoint references.

[102] Sujit Choudhry (ed), *The Migration of Constitutional Ideas* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Anne-Marie Slaughter, "A Typology of Transjudicial Communication" 29 *University of Richmond Law Review* 99 (1994).
[103] Richard A Posner, "Against Footnotes" 49 *Stanford Law Review* 1647 (1999).
[104] Practice Direction (Citation of Authorities) [2012] 1 WLR 780.
[105] *Kesavananda Bharati* v *State of Kerala* (1973) 4 SCC 225; AIR 1973 SC 1461.

The rise of neutral citation

Neutral citation was developed to solve some of these problems. A neutral citation identifies a judgment by year, court and sequential number, independently of any publisher, and numbers the paragraphs of the judgment so that a particular passage can be pointed to without reference to a report's pagination. England and Wales adopted the system through a Practice Direction issued in 2001.[106] Australian courts adopted a medium neutral citation standard at about the same time, which is now reflected in the *Australian Guide to Legal Citation*.[107] The Canadian approach, described in the *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation*, follows a similar logic.[108] South Africa's Constitutional Court uses a neutral form such as [1995] ZACC 3 alongside the traditional report citation 1995 (3) SA 391 (CC) for *S v Makwanyane*.[109] Singapore likewise uses court-based neutral identifiers.

India has moved in the same direction more recently. The Supreme Court of India introduced a neutral citation system in 2023, under which its judgments carry identifiers in the form "2023 INSC 1", and several High Courts have adopted comparable forms.[110] Given the size of the Indian judiciary and its output, this development is of real importance to any Commonwealth discussion, since it brings the largest common law jurisdiction closer to a pattern already used elsewhere.

Yet neutral citation is not a single system. Court codes differ, the placement of the year and the use of square or round brackets vary, and some jurisdictions use identifiers that look neutral but are in fact tied to a particular publisher or database. Kenya's widely used [2020] eKLR form, for example, identifies a case within an electronic report series, which is different in kind from a court-assigned number.[111] Neutral citation has therefore reduced, but not removed, the need for harmonisation.

Style guides

The second layer of difference lies in the style guides that govern footnotes and bibliographies. The *Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities* (OSCOLA) is widely used in the United Kingdom and in many Commonwealth institutions that look to British practice.[112] The *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (AGLC) serves Australian journals and has influenced writing elsewhere in the region. The Canadian *McGill Guide* is a detailed system used throughout Canadian legal writing. New Zealand has its own *New Zealand Law Style Guide*. Outside the Commonwealth, the *Bluebook* dominates in the United States and has strongly influenced journals in other countries, including some in South Asia.

In India there is no single dominant guide. Journals follow house styles, some based on the Bluebook, some on OSCOLA, and others on local conventions developed by institutions or editorial boards. Many African and Caribbean journals likewise borrow from British, Canadian or American models. The result is a situation in which an author writing for several journals may need to restyle the same article repeatedly, and a student moving between institutions may learn that what was correct last year is wrong this year.

A three-layer view

It is useful to see the problem as having three layers. The first is the *identification layer*: how a case, statute or other source is uniquely named and numbered. The second is the *presentation layer*: how that identification is formatted in a footnote or bibliography. The third is the *editorial layer*: the rules on abbreviations, pinpoints, quotations, cross-references and sources that are new or unusual. Agreement is most valuable, and most achievable, at the first layer; it is less important and harder to achieve at the third. A sensible strategy would begin with the foundation and move upwards.

Important Themes

Neutral citation, open access and the persistent identifier

The strongest argument for harmonisation lies in the identification layer, and the most promising instrument is neutral citation linked to open access. The Free Access to Law Movement, which grew out of the legal information institutes that publish judgments and legislation online, has argued for many years that primary law should be available to

[106] Practice Direction (Judgments: Form and Citation) [2001] 1 WLR 194.
[107] Melbourne University Law Review Association, *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (4th edn., 2018), on medium neutral citation.
[108] McGill Law Journal, *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation* (Carswell), on neutral citation.
[109] *S v Makwanyane* [1995] ZACC 3; 1995 (3) SA 391 (CC).
[110] Supreme Court of India, adoption of neutral citation for judgments (2023). The identifiers appear on judgments published on the Court's website; the precise form used by each High Court should be confirmed from the court concerned.
[111] Kenya Law, *Kenya Law Reports* (National Council for Law Reporting), where decisions are identified in the form '[year] eKLR.'
[112] Faculty of Law, University of Oxford, *Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities* (OSCOLA) (4th edn., 2012).

everyone without charge.[113] A court that assigns a neutral number and publishes the judgment promptly gives every reader the same starting point.

The question is whether Commonwealth law schools and journals should agree to treat the neutral citation, where one exists, as the primary identifier, with any commercial report cited in parallel or not at all. This approach is already common in several jurisdictions. Extending it would raise questions about older decisions that have no neutral number, about courts that have not yet adopted the system, and about the authority of reports where the neutral version and the reported version differ.

A further step would be to consider a common minimum format for neutral citations: year, court code, number, and paragraph pinpoint, in a fixed order. The format need not be identical everywhere, but a shared template, supplemented by a published register of court codes, would allow software and readers alike to interpret any Commonwealth neutral citation without guesswork.

Pinpointing and the paragraph

Pinpoint citation, meaning a reference to a specific page or paragraph, is where much of the practical value of a citation lies. Page references depend on a particular printing and are unstable once judgments circulate in electronic form. Paragraph numbers, assigned by the court and carried into every version, are more reliable. Where a judgment is not paragraphed, writers must fall back on page numbers of one report or another, and the reader's task becomes harder.

The colloquium may also consider how to treat multiple opinions, dissents and concurrences, where the reader needs to know not only which paragraph but which judge. Practice differs on whether the name of the judge should appear in the pinpoint, and on how to cite a passage in a joint judgment. A modest agreement here would improve clarity in a great deal of writing.

The divergence of style guides

Why do style guides differ at all? Partly because each emerged from a local legal culture and met local needs. OSCOLA favours economy, with minimal punctuation and no full stops in abbreviations. The Bluebook is built for the demands of United States law reviews and contains detailed rules. The McGill Guide accommodates Canada's bilingual and bijural system. Each guide reflects its home system's courts, reports and statutes.

At the same time, much of the divergence is accidental. Whether a comma follows a case name, whether the court appears in brackets, or whether the author's initials come before or after the surname are matters on which no principle of legal reasoning depends

Scholarly sources raise their own questions. Books, articles, working papers, blog posts, reports of official bodies and online materials are cited differently under each guide, and the rise of preprint repositories and open-access platforms has multiplied the forms in which work appears. Rules on the use of digital object identifiers, access dates, archived copies and stable links are inconsistent, and a link that works today may fail next year. A common core might at least require that every online source be cited with enough detail, including a persistent link where one exists, to allow it to be found again.

One practical option is a short common framework that sets out, in a few pages, the minimum information a Commonwealth citation should contain for each type of source, and leaves the formatting to the guide the institution chooses. Under this approach, OSCOLA, AGLC and McGill would remain in use, but each would be understood as a way of presenting the same underlying information. Law schools could then teach the core and treat the guides as applications of it.

Statutes, subordinate legislation and international materials

Short titles, section numbering, amendment history and consolidated versions in the statutes and subordinate legislation are handled differently across the Commonwealth. In some jurisdictions the official consolidated text is online and versioned by date; in others, readers rely on private compilations. A citation that does not state which version of an enactment is meant may mislead, especially where provisions have been amended many times.

The Commonwealth also has distinctive shared materials, the Commonwealth Charter, the reports of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and regional bodies, and a growing body of model laws.[114] Treaties, United Nations documents and decisions of regional courts add further sources. A Commonwealth framework would be incomplete if it ignored these, and the colloquium may find it useful to ask whether a specific section on Commonwealth and international materials should form part of any agreed text.

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[113] Declaration on Free Access to Law (Montreal, Oct. 2002); see also Graham Greenleaf, "The Global Development of Free Access to Legal Information" 1 *European Journal of Law and Technology* (2010).
[114] Commonwealth Secretariat, *Charter of the Commonwealth* (2013).

A more difficult question concerns sources that do not fit the model of a printed report or enactment at all. In many Commonwealth countries customary law, community practice and oral tradition remain important, and scholarship on indigenous legal orders often draws on sources that cannot be cited in the conventional way.[115] A framework built only on the conventions of written common law reporting would fail these traditions. The colloquium should consider how to cite oral and customary sources respectfully and with enough detail for verification, in cooperation with the communities concerned.

Language, translation and access

The Commonwealth is multilingual. Legislation and judgments are produced in English, but also in French in Canada and parts of Africa, and increasingly in regional languages, including those of India, where the Supreme Court has begun to make translations of its judgments available. A uniform approach to citation must consider how a translated judgment is to be cited, which version is authoritative, and how to name the translator or the translating body. Without clear rules, translated material risks being cited as if it were the original, with possible errors of meaning.

This theme links closely to the Conference's concern with legal language and access to justice, discussed in the Introduction and Part V. A citation system that is hard to learn or apply excludes those who have not been trained in its conventions, including law students in under-resourced institutions, self-represented litigants and community paralegals. Plain-language principles can apply to citation as to any other part of legal writing, rules should be few, consistent and capable of being explained in simple terms. Guidance on citation should be published in more than one language where the jurisdiction's circumstances require it.[116]

Artificial intelligence and the fabrication of authority

The colloquium meets at a time when the reliability of citations has become a pressing professional concern. Courts in several jurisdictions have dealt with filings that cited cases which do not exist, because the author relied on a generative tool without checking its output. In the United States, the widely reported case of *Mata* v *Avianca, Inc* involved a brief containing fabricated authorities and led to sanctions on the lawyers concerned.[117] Courts in the United Kingdom have also confronted the problem, in a tax tribunal appeal and, more recently, in the Divisional Court decision in *Ayinde* (discussed in the Introduction), which warned practitioners that placing false material before a court may have serious professional consequences.[118]

These events bear directly on the design of citation standards. A standard format that can be checked against a court-assigned neutral number or a persistent link is easier to verify than a loose description. If courts and publishers made available machine-readable records for each judgment, a writer or editor could confirm in seconds that a citation corresponds to a real document. The colloquium may therefore wish to consider whether a Commonwealth framework should be built with verification in mind, so that every citation can be resolved to a trustworthy source, and whether law schools should teach verification as part of citation practice and not as a separate matter.

It should be noted that artificial intelligence may also help. Tools that check citations against databases, flag formatting errors and convert references from one style to another could reduce the burden of compliance that fuels resistance to a common standard. But such tools should be treated as aids, not as substitutes for the writer's own responsibility. This point connects this Part to Part IV, on research ethics and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

Scholarly publishing, equity and the Global South

Citation conventions are not neutral in their effects. Journals in well-resourced jurisdictions often set exacting requirements that authors elsewhere find hard to meet, particularly where access to the cited materials depends on expensive subscription databases. An author in a small institution who cannot obtain the authorised report may be unable to cite correctly, and may be judged accordingly. A uniform framework that favoured materials available only to wealthy institutions would deepen inequality in Commonwealth scholarship.

There is also the matter of whose law is visible. Comparative studies of citation patterns suggest that scholars and courts in smaller or newer jurisdictions cite decisions from larger and older ones far more often than the reverse. If a common standard makes the decisions of every jurisdiction equally easy to find and cite, it may help to correct this imbalance. Journals themselves have a role. Editors can adopt the common framework, accept submissions in any recognised style at the first stage and require conformity only on acceptance, and publish their requirements openly. Indexing services and repositories can reward consistent citation by making it easier to track the influence of work

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[115] *See* H Patrick Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World* (Oxford University Press, 5th edn., 2014), on the plurality of legal traditions and the variety of their sources.

[116] On drafting and expression in plain language more generally, *see* Bryan A Garner, *Legal Writing in Plain English* (University of Chicago Press, 2001); Peter Butt, *Modern Legal Drafting: A Guide to Using Clearer Language* (Cambridge University Press, 3rd edn., 2013).

[117] *Mata* v *Avianca, Inc* 678 F Supp 3d 443 (SDNY 2023).

[118] *Harber v Commissioners for HMRC* [2023] UKFTT 1007 (TC); *R (Ayinde)* v *London Borough of Haringey* [2025] EWHC 1383 (Admin).

across borders. These steps are modest but would make a real difference to authors working in less well-supported settings.

Models of Harmonisation

If some measure of harmonisation is desirable, the next question is how to achieve it. Four broad models can be identified, and they are not mutually exclusive.

Model A: a single Commonwealth code. Under this model a drafting body would produce one citation guide for the whole Commonwealth, to be adopted by law schools and journals in place of existing guides. Its attraction is simplicity. Its weaknesses are practical and political. Existing guides are embedded in institutions, publishing contracts, software and teaching materials, and many are maintained by bodies with their own interests. A new code risks becoming one more style among many, increasing and not reducing variety.

Model B: a common core with local modules. This model sets out a short statement of principles and minimum content for each source type, and allows each jurisdiction to maintain its own detailed rules in a module that conforms to the core. It respects diversity, and is easier to adopt because it asks institutions to align rather than replace. Its weakness is that a core which is too general may achieve little, while a core which is too detailed may start to look like Model A.

Model C: mutual recognition. Under this model, each institution would agree to accept citations in any of a list of approved styles, without asking authors to convert. Editors would be trained in several styles, and software would assist with translation. This is the lightest-touch option and could be implemented quickly. It does not, however, reduce the learning burden on students or the confusion caused by multiple forms in teaching.

Model D: interoperability through data. This model focuses on the identification layer and proposes that every judgment and enactment carry a persistent identifier, assigned by the issuing authority and published in a machine-readable register. Style guides would then be presented as different displays of the same data. This is the model best suited to the age of electronic publication and automated checking.

Key Points for Deliberation

The following questions are offered to give structure to the colloquium. They are not exhaustive, and participants may wish to add to them or reframe them.

- *Purpose and scope.* Is the aim of the colloquium to recommend a single standard, a common core, or a system of mutual recognition? Should the framework cover case law only, or also legislation, secondary sources, international materials and sources of customary law?
- *The identification layer.* Should law schools and journals use the court-assigned neutral citation as the primary identifier wherever one exists? How should decisions without neutral citations be cited, and how should parallel citations be handled?
- *Existing guides.* Which parts of OSCOLA, AGLC, McGill, Bluebook, APA, Chicago and other guides reflect real legal differences and should be kept, and which reflect only historical accident and could be harmonised? Who should carry out this comparison?
- *Statutes and subordinate legislation.* How should citation of legislation deal with amendment history and consolidated versions? Should the date or version of the text consulted be stated?
- *Commonwealth and international materials.* Should an agreed framework include a specific part on Commonwealth instruments, Privy Council decisions, regional courts and international sources?
- *Customary, oral and indigenous sources.* How can an agreed standard accommodate sources not found in printed reports? What safeguards are needed to ensure that communities are consulted and their materials treated respectfully?
- *Language and translation.* How should translated judgments and enactments be cited? Which version should be treated as authoritative, and how should the translating body be identified?
- *Verification and artificial intelligence.* Should the framework contain express requirements for verifying citations, including those suggested by AI tools? Should law schools teach citation verification as a core skill?
- *Equity of access.* How can the framework avoid disadvantaging authors and institutions with limited access to commercial databases? Should open-access sources be given priority where they are available?
- *Adoption and governance.* Who should hold responsibility for maintaining the framework? How often should it be revised, and how will disputes be resolved?
- *Transition.* How should institutions move from present practice to any new standard without disadvantaging authors, and how should adoption be phased?

- *Courts and judicial writing.* How can the academic standard be aligned with the practice of courts on neutral citation and publication?

Conclusion

Citation is among the least glamorous parts of legal scholarship, and for that reason its importance is often underestimated. Yet every argument in law depends on the reader's ability to find and trust its sources, and the habits by which this is done are among the first that a student learns and the last that a scholar abandons. The Commonwealth shares a legal heritage but cites it in many ways, and in an era of digital publication, artificial intelligence and growing judicial dialogue across borders, the cost of this variety is rising.

This Part has suggested that the response should be proportionate and respectful of difference. A common core of principles, a shared approach to identification, a commitment to verification and a concern for equity would together do much more good than an attempt to impose a single style. The colloquium of judges, senior academicians, Vice-Chancellors and Professors is well placed to begin this work, because those who lead courts and law schools shape curricula, editorial boards and research cultures, and can change habits where others cannot.

If the colloquium can agree on even a few foundations, it will have taken a real step towards the aim of the Hyderabad Statement: a set of Commonwealth principles that help law schools navigate technology, integrity and access. A reader anywhere in the Commonwealth ought to be able to follow a reference to its source with confidence. That is a modest aim, but it is one on which much else depends.

PART III - INTEGRATING CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION IN CORE LEGAL SUBJECTS

Technical Session III · 21 November 2026 · 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

> *Parts I and II concern how legal knowledge is shown and how it is sourced. Part III turns to how that knowledge is used. The Introduction described the gap between the academic study of law and professional competence, a gap that Indian courts are now trying to close after graduation through the rules for judicial recruitment. Carrying clinical method into the core subjects is the response most clearly within a law school's own control. Part III examines what that integration means, what it costs, and how it can be staged responsibly.*

Introduction

In 1933 Jerome Frank asked why law schools should not be built on the model of the teaching hospital, with students handling real problems under supervision rather than reading the decided cases of others.[119] The question has outlived its author. Nearly a century later, the debate in most jurisdictions is no longer whether clinical method has a place in legal education but where it sits and how much of the curriculum it is allowed to touch.

India's regulator answered the first question decisively in the Rules of Legal Education, 2008, which make clinical courses compulsory and require every institution to run a legal aid clinic.[120] The second question remains open. The Rules create clinical courses as a distinct category. They do not require, and the system has largely not attempted, any change in how Constitutional Law or Evidence is taught. A student can therefore complete the doctrinal core without once applying it to a live or realistic client problem, and then meet the clinical papers late in the programme as a largely separate experience.

This Part asks a narrower question than the usual advocacy for clinical education: given that a separate clinical block already exists, what would it take to carry clinical method into the core subjects, and is the cost justified? A caution on method is necessary at the outset. The Indian literature on clinical legal education is overwhelmingly normative. It describes what clinics should achieve; it rarely reports what they have achieved, measured against any comparison group. Claims about benefits in this Part are therefore treated as hypotheses supported by comparative scholarship and professional-education theory, not as established Indian findings.

[119] Jerome Frank, "Why Not a Clinical Lawyer-School?" 81 *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 907 (1933).
[120] Bar Council of India, *Rules of Legal Education, 2008* (Part IV of the Bar Council of India Rules), approved by the Bar Council of India on Sept. 14, 2008 vide Resolution No. 110/2008.

Conceptual Framework

What "clinical" covers

The term is used loosely and the looseness causes real confusion in policy discussion. Three distinct modes are usually grouped under it: in-house clinics where students advise or assist real clients under faculty supervision; externships or placements with courts, lawyers, legal services authorities and civil society organisations; and simulation, including role-plays, moots, mock negotiations and problem-based exercises built on realistic facts.[121] Each has different costs, risks and learning outcomes. A proposal to "integrate clinical education" that does not say which mode it means has not yet said anything. The Indian conception owes much to N.R. Madhava Menon, who treated clinical education as central to the design of the National Law School of India University rather than as an optional course attached to it.[122]

Integration compared with an add-on

Integration means that a doctrinal subject's learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment are redesigned so that students must use the doctrine to do something a lawyer does: interview, advise, draft, negotiate, argue, or evaluate a client's options. An add-on, by contrast, leaves the subject as it was and attaches an activity to it. A moot problem attached at the end of a Contract course is an add-on.

The theoretical case rests on experiential learning and reflective practice. Kolb's cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualisation and experimentation,[123] and Schön's account of professionals who learn by reflecting on action,[124] are the usual foundations. In legal education, the Carnegie Foundation's study, discussed in the Introduction, argued that professional formation needs three apprenticeships (intellectual, practical and ethical-social) and that American law schools taught the first well and the others poorly.[125] The earlier MacCrate Report and the later *Best Practices for Legal Education* made related arguments about skills and values.[126] None of this literature is Indian, and its empirical claims should not be transplanted without testing. The structural point, however, travels: a curriculum that teaches the three apprenticeships in separate compartments tends to teach the second and third badly.

What integration is not

Three things are commonly mistaken for integration. Adding more moot courts is not integration. Renaming a legal awareness camp as a clinic is not integration. And asking doctrinal teachers to "give practical examples" in lectures, while keeping the lecture and the written examination unchanged, is not integration either, because the students' own work and the assessed outcomes remain untouched.

The Indian Background

Policy history

Concern about the quality and practical orientation of Indian legal education is old. The Law Commission's Fourteenth Report in 1958 described legal education in grim terms, citing part-time teaching and the rapid growth of weak colleges.[127] The Expert Committee on Legal Aid, reporting in 1973, linked legal aid with the involvement of law schools and students.[128] Article 39A, added to the Constitution in 1976, directed the State to secure equal justice and free legal aid,[129] and the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 gave statutory form to the entitlement.[130] The Supreme Court had by then read legal aid into the guarantee of a fair procedure for those who cannot afford a lawyer.[131] The same period produced the National Law School model, in which clinical education was part of the founding design.[132]

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[121] Elliott S. Milstein, "Clinical Legal Education in the United States: In-House Clinics, Externships, and Simulations" 51 *Journal of Legal Education* 375 (2001).
[122] N.R. Madhava Menon, *Clinical Legal Education* (Eastern Book Company, Lucknow, 1998).
[123] David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1984).
[124] Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (Basic Books, New York, 1983).
[125] William M. Sullivan *et al.*, *Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2007).
[126] Roy Stuckey *et al.*, *Best Practices for Legal Education: A Vision and a Road Map* (Clinical Legal Education Association, 2007).
[127] Law Commission of India, *Fourteenth Report: Reform of Judicial Administration* (Government of India, New Delhi, 1958).
[128] Government of India, *Report of the Expert Committee on Legal Aid: Processual Justice to the People* (Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, New Delhi, 1973).
[129] The Constitution of India, art. 39A (inserted by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976).
[130] The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 (Act 39 of 1987), s. 12.
[131] *Hussainara Khatoon* v. *Home Secretary, State of Bihar* (1980) 1 SCC 81.
[132] Menon, *Clinical Legal Education*, *supra*.
[133] Frank S. Bloch and M.R.K. Prasad, "Institutionalizing a Social Justice Mission for Clinical Legal Education: Cross-National Currents from India and the United States" 13 *Clinical Law Review* 165 (2006).
[134] Law Commission of India, *One Hundred and Eighty-Fourth Report on the Legal Education and Professional Training and Proposals for Amendments to the Advocates Act, 1961 and the University Grants Commission Act, 1956* (Government of India, New Delhi, 2002).

Bloch and Prasad, writing in 2006, argued that India had an unusual opportunity to institutionalise a social-justice-oriented clinical education across all law schools, while acknowledging that professional-skills training and social-justice goals can pull in different directions.[133] The Law Commission's 184th Report in 2002 recommended that clinical legal education be made a mandatory subject.[134]

The regulatory framework

The Bar Council of India's authority over legal education rests on the Advocates Act, 1961, which charges it with promoting legal education and laying down its standards, and empowers it to make rules on the standards of legal education to be observed by universities.[135] The Supreme Court has repeatedly been drawn into the limits of that authority. It invalidated the Bar Council's pre-enrolment training rules in *V. Sudeer*,[136] and in an earlier decision struck down an age cap for entry to the profession.[137] In *Bonnie Foi Law College*, the Constitution Bench revisited the question, noted with concern the decline in the standards of legal education, and upheld the Bar Council's power to prescribe an All India Bar Examination as a post-enrolment requirement.[138] The point is that the regulator has both a mandate and judicial backing to prescribe practical competence, but has used that power mainly through course lists and examinations, not through the design of individual subjects.

The 2008 Rules provide for four compulsory clinical courses: professional ethics and professional accountability; alternative dispute resolution; drafting, pleading and conveyancing; and moot court exercise and internship. They also require each institution to establish and run a legal aid clinic under the supervision of a senior faculty member, and permit clinical courses to be taught by retired judicial officers or members of the Bar, with internships distributed across the programme.[139] Universities retain autonomy over most other elements of the curriculum, but the courses prescribed by the Rules are mandatory. That division matters: integration into core subjects falls within a university's own design freedom, provided the prescribed courses are still delivered.

The gap between mandate and practice

The Rules do not define what counts as a clinical course, so institutions are free to teach the clinical papers in a wholly theoretical manner, which defeats their purpose.[140] Reports of a 2011 UNDP study of law school clinics indicate that most colleges had designated faculty for legal aid activity, but that the student-run legal aid cells found in many Indian law schools generally operate without credit or faculty supervision of the kind a clinic requires, which weakens their academic standing.[141] Sharma's survey of the field identifies similar problems of infrastructure, faculty and regulatory uncertainty.[142]

Placement compounds the problem. At least some universities schedule the four clinical papers in the final semester,[143] so students meet practice-oriented teaching after the doctrinal core has been taught and examined as a body of rules. The structure itself tells students that doctrine comes first and practice afterwards.

There are examples of more ambitious work. Kalantry argues that clinics also serve a democratic function, since they put students from relatively privileged backgrounds in direct contact with people from other castes, classes and communities.[144] The Jindal Global Law School's village-based clinical work is a documented attempt to build such links in an Indian setting.[145] These accounts are instructive but they are descriptions of programmes by their own participants. They are not evaluations.

The Case for Integration and Its Limits

Arguments in favour

The strongest argument is pedagogical. Doctrine learned in the abstract is typically learned as a list of propositions and exceptions. Doctrine used to solve a client's problem has to be selected, ordered, applied to messy facts and communicated to a non-lawyer.

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[135] The Advocates Act, 1961 (Act 25 of 1961), ss. 7(1)(h) and 49(1)(d).
[136] *V. Sudeer* v. *Bar Council of India* (1999) 3 SCC 176.
[137] *Indian Council of Legal Aid and Advice* v. *Bar Council of India* (1995) 1 SCC 732.
[138] *Bar Council of India* v. *Bonnie Foi Law College*, 2023 SCC OnLine SC 130 (Constitution Bench, decided on Feb. 10, 2023).
[139] Bar Council of India, *Rules of Legal Education, 2008*, *supra*, sch. II; sch. III, cls. 11 and 20; r. 25.
[140] Avani Bansal, "Clinical Legal Education as a Means to Advance Access to Justice in India", *LiveLaw* (July 4, 2017), *available at*: https://www.livelaw.in/clinical-legal-education-means-advance-access-justice-india (last visited on Oct. 20, 2026).
[141] Jayshree Satpute, "Clinical Legal Education: A Way Towards Up-Scaling Access to Justice in India", *Bar & Bench*, *available at*: https://www.barandbench.com/columns/clinical-legal-education-a-way-towards-up-scaling-access-to-justice-in-india (last visited on Oct. 21, 2026).
[142] Nidhi Sharma, "Clinical Legal Education in India: A Contemporary Legal Pedagogy" 8(1) *Indian Journal of Law and Justice* 165 (2017).
[143] *See, e.g.*, Andhra University, *Regulations relating to LL.B. Degree Examination (Three-Year) (Under Semester System) from the Academic Year 2009-2010*, which provide for the four compulsory clinical papers in the final semester. Placement of these courses varies across universities.
[144] Sital Kalantry, "Promoting Clinical Legal Education and Democracy in India" 8 *NUJS Law Review* 1 (2015).
[145] Priya S. Gupta, Kudrat Dev, Meher Dev and Kirti Rana, "How Clinical Education Builds Bridges with Villages for a Global Law School in India" 63(3) *Journal of Legal Education* 512 (2014).

Frank's complaint about the study of appellate opinions alone was precisely that students never saw the facts as clients present them.[146] Integration extends that insight from a single clinic course to the subjects in which most of a student's time is spent.

A second argument is access to justice. India's demand for legal assistance far exceeds the supply of lawyers able to provide it, and the Legal Services Authorities Act already contemplates structured legal aid. Students who are trained to work with clients throughout the programme, not only in the last year, can contribute to that effort earlier, under supervision. A third argument is ethical formation. Professional responsibility taught only in a stand-alone course is easily treated as an examination topic; encountered inside Criminal Procedure or Family Law, where the temptation to cut corners is concrete, it has more chance of becoming a habit.

Arguments against, and why they cannot be dismissed

Several objections deserve a direct answer, and some cannot be fully answered.

First, time. The curriculum is already crowded and prescribed by the regulator. Experiential work takes more contact time per learning outcome than lectures. If integration is added to existing content, doctrinal coverage suffers; if it replaces content, someone must decide what is no longer taught. A proposal that does not say what is being dropped is not credible.

Second, faculty. Most doctrinal teachers were trained in the lecture and case method and have limited practice experience. Asking them to supervise client work or design realistic simulations is asking for a skill many do not have. Co-teaching with practitioners is the usual answer, and the Rules' permission for the Bar and retired judicial officers to teach clinical courses helps, but it also raises questions of continuity, pay and quality control.

Third, harm to clients. Under the Advocates Act, only advocates are entitled to practise before courts and tribunals,[147] so students cannot represent clients and any live-client component must be structured as supervised advice, research and drafting. Poorly supervised student work can injure real people, and the risk grows as clinical method is spread across more courses and more teachers.

Fourth, evidence. The proposition that integrated clinical teaching produces better lawyers, or better doctrinal learners, is plausible but not demonstrated in the Indian context. Comparative evidence is mixed in quality and comes from different institutional settings. Any programme that adopts integration at scale without an evaluation plan is making an untested bet with students' time.

Fifth, competing goals. As Bloch and Prasad observe, the skills-training rationale and the social-justice rationale for clinics can conflict.[148] A subject designed to produce employable litigation associates may choose different clients, problems and assessments from one designed to serve marginalised communities. Integration proposals should say which goal governs when the two collide.

Integrating Clinical Legal Education into Core Legal Subjects

The integration of clinical legal education into core legal subjects requires a deliberate institutional design rather than the occasional addition of practical exercises to doctrinal teaching. Clinical education becomes meaningful only when client-centred learning, ethical reflection, skills training, and doctrinal analysis are treated as mutually reinforcing components of legal education.[149] The central question, therefore, is not whether law schools should offer clinical exposure, but how clinical work can be embedded within the ordinary curriculum so that students learn doctrine through its application to real or realistic legal problems.

Integration models

Four broad models may be adopted for integrating clinical legal education into core subjects.

Under *Model A*, or the infusion model, each doctrinal subject incorporates two or three short, assessed exercises such as a client interview, a drafting assignment, or a mock hearing. This model is comparatively inexpensive and can be retrofitted into existing courses, but it risks reducing clinical education to a peripheral add-on unless the exercises carry meaningful assessment weight.[150]

Under *Model B*, a doctrinal course is linked to a supervised clinic or placement, with the cases handled by the clinic supplying the problems studied in the classroom. Criminal Procedure may thus be linked to a legal aid desk, while Family Law may be connected with a family court or mediation centre. This model offers the strongest form of integration, but its effectiveness depends on adequate supervisor capacity and a regular flow of suitable matters.

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[146] Frank, "Why Not a Clinical Lawyer-School?", *supra*.
[147] The Advocates Act, 1961 (Act 25 of 1961), ss. 29 and 33.
[148] Bloch and Prasad, "Institutionalizing a Social Justice Mission", *supra*.
[149] Roy Stuckey *et al.*, "Best Practices for Legal Education: A Vision and a Road Map" (Clinical Legal Education Association, 2007); *see also* University Grants Commission, *Report of the Committee on Clinical Legal Education* (2013).
[150] *Ibid.*

Model C, the problem-based spine, organises an entire subject around a limited number of extended and realistic client files that unfold across the semester. It provides curricular coherence and does not necessarily require external institutional partners, but it demands substantial design effort and faculty members capable of assessing student work in the manner of a clinical supervisor.

Finally, *Model D* uses a capstone externship or advanced clinic in the later years of study. The experience gained by students is then brought back into doctrinal courses through case discussions based on their files. While this model is closest to prevailing arrangements in many institutions, it is also the least integrated because clinical learning remains largely separated from foundational doctrinal teaching.

No single model is universally suitable. A practical strategy for an institution with limited supervisory capacity would be to adopt Model A in the early semesters, introduce Model B in two or three high-value subjects, and retain the existing clinical papers as the capstone experience.

Subject-wise integration

Clinical components can be tailored to the pedagogical objectives of individual core subjects. In *Constitutional Law*, students may trace a documented rights grievance, such as the denial of a statutory entitlement, from the constitutional text to the available remedy, and thereafter draft a representation or an outline of a writ petition under supervision. The assessed outcome may focus on the quality of issue framing, the choice of forum, and the accurate application of constitutional doctrine to facts.

In *Contract Law*, students may interview a small-business client, draft and negotiate a supply or service agreement in a simulation, and review a standard-form contract for unfair terms. The assessment may evaluate the quality of drafting as applied doctrine, the negotiation record, and a reflective note.

In *Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure*, suitable exercises include drafting a bail application from a case file, shadowing a legal aid desk or panel lawyer under supervision, and analysing an FIR and a remand order. Assessment should emphasise statutory accuracy under the current law, supervisor feedback, and ethical reflection.

Civil Procedure may incorporate the drafting of a plaint and written statement from client facts, together with an audit of a closed court file to identify delay and procedural turning points. In *Evidence*, students may participate in mock examination-in-chief and cross-examination, and complete admissibility exercises concerning documents and electronic records.

Family Law can integrate client counselling and mediation role-plays, drafting of maintenance applications, and observation of family court or mediation proceedings. *Property Law* may include a title-search exercise using public registration records, followed by drafting a sale deed or lease. *Administrative Law* may involve a Right to Information-based audit of an administrative decision and drafting of an appeal or representation against an administrative order. Even *Jurisprudence* can be integrated through reflective journals connecting client narratives from other courses with theories of justice and legal reasoning.

Assessment as the test of integration

Assessment ultimately determines whether clinical integration is genuine or merely symbolic. If written examinations continue to test only the recall of doctrine, students will rationally discount clinical components and treat them as secondary. Credible assessment of integrated work therefore requires published rubrics, supervisor feedback on drafts, and reflective journals in which students connect their clinical experience to doctrine and to their own professional conduct.[151] A fixed proportion of marks in each integrated subject should be allocated to clinical work. Further, faculty members should moderate marking across supervisors so that assessment standards do not vary according to the identity of the supervisor. Such moderation is essential to preserve academic rigour, fairness, and comparability across student cohorts.

Implementation Constraints

Ethics and supervision. Every live-client component needs written protocols on confidentiality, conflicts of interest, informed consent and the limits of what students may do, all consistent with the bar on student practice noted above. Supervision ratios must be set in advance and honoured. If an institution cannot supervise a component properly, it should run it as a simulation instead.

Faculty capacity. Co-teaching with practitioners, joint appointments, and structured training for doctrinal teachers in supervision and feedback are all needed. The regulator's allowance for clinical courses to be taught by members of the Bar and retired judicial officers is a starting point,[152] but it does not address the training of the existing faculty.

[151] Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, *supra*, at 21-23.
[152] Bar Council of India, *Rules of Legal Education, 2008*, *supra*.

Partnerships. Legal services authorities, courts, mediation centres and non-governmental organisations are the obvious partners. Partnerships need written agreements covering case allocation, supervision, confidentiality and the termination of the arrangement without prejudice to clients.

Curriculum time and regulation. Because the clinical courses and other papers are prescribed by the regulator, integrated components must be placed within the credits available. Institutions should reallocate within subjects and, where they cannot, seek clarification from the Bar Council on whether integrated assessment can count toward the prescribed clinical courses.

Evaluation. Programmes should be designed to produce evidence: baseline and follow-up measures of doctrinal performance, skills and ethical reasoning; student and client feedback; and comparison with cohorts that did not receive the integrated components. Without this, the next decade of Indian debate will repeat the last.

Recommendations

- Define, in institutional policy, which of the three clinical modes (in-house clinic, externship, simulation) each integrated component uses. Proposals that do not specify the mode should not be approved.
- Map the whole programme to a short list of competencies, and assign each competency to named subjects. The four prescribed clinical courses become part of this map, not the whole of it.
- Start with two or three core subjects where supervision capacity and community demand are strongest, such as Criminal Procedure, Family Law and Administrative Law, rather than reforming every subject at once.
- Assign a fixed and meaningful share of each integrated subject's marks to the clinical component, assessed by published rubrics and moderated across supervisors.
- Invest in faculty development and co-teaching with practitioners, and stop treating clinical supervision as an unpaid add-on to a full teaching load.
- Formalise partnerships with legal services authorities and other bodies in writing, and rebuild case materials on the new criminal statutes while keeping students able to work with the earlier statutes.
- Build evaluation into the design from the first semester, and publish the results, including negative ones.
- Ask the Bar Council of India to define "clinical" in the Rules, to clarify how integrated assessment may count toward the prescribed courses, and to require institutions to report the share of students who receive live-client experience.

Conclusion

The case for carrying clinical method into the core subjects is stronger than the case for leaving it in a separate block, because the separation itself teaches students that doctrine and practice are different enterprises. But the case is not strong enough to justify an unplanned or unfunded rollout. Integration costs curriculum time, needs faculty who can supervise, and carries real risks to clients if done carelessly. The Indian evidence that it works is thin. The sensible course is staged adoption in a few subjects, with explicit assessment, ethical safeguards and a built-in evaluation, and with the willingness to scale back if the results do not justify the cost.

PART IV - RESEARCH ETHICS AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Technical Session IV · 22 November 2026 · 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

> *Part IV returns to artificial intelligence, this time in legal research and scholarship. Part I asked how institutions should judge students' work. Part IV asks what researchers, supervisors, editors and publishers owe to the integrity of the knowledge they produce. The demand for verification raised in Part II appears here in a wider form, alongside questions of authorship, confidentiality, bias and the unequal digital visibility of Commonwealth legal systems.*

Introduction

Research is one of the principal means through which societies test ideas, deepen understanding and develop knowledge capable of informing public debate, institutional practice and the law. Its value, however, depends not only on the significance of the questions it addresses or the conclusions it reaches, but also on the integrity of the process through which those conclusions are produced. Research ethics provides the normative foundation for that process. It encompasses honesty, intellectual rigour, objectivity, transparency, fairness, respect for intellectual contributions,

protection of research participants and accountability for the claims advanced. These principles are essential to the credibility of scholarship, without which, the production of information may be mistaken for the production of reliable knowledge.

Research ethics is not confined to preventing plagiarism or avoiding deliberate fabrication. It also requires researchers to select appropriate methods, represent evidence accurately, acknowledge sources, disclose relevant limitations, protect confidential information and correct errors when they come to light. In research involving human participants, it further requires attention to informed consent, privacy, dignity and the potential consequences of the research. Ethical responsibility therefore extends across the research process, from the framing of a question and collection of material to analysis, publication and subsequent use of findings. It is this broader understanding of research integrity that must guide the use of emerging technologies in academic life.

Artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI, is now changing the conditions under which knowledge is located, analysed, produced, taught and disseminated. Tools that generate text, summarise documents, translate materials and identify patterns in large datasets may improve access to information, support multilingual learning and assist with preliminary research. At the same time, they raise questions about the reliability of generated content, authorship, disclosure, bias, privacy and the proper allocation of responsibility. AI can produce a fluent and convincing answer without establishing that the answer is accurate, complete or supported by the sources it appears to invoke.

These concerns are especially acute in legal research. A fabricated judicial authority, an inaccurate statutory reference or a misleading summary of a judgment may appear plausible while being legally wrong. If used without verification in a dissertation, article, teaching material, legal opinion or court submission, such an error can compromise the integrity of the work. An empirical study of leading AI-assisted legal research tools found material hallucinations despite techniques intended to improve factual grounding, demonstrating that AI-assisted legal research systems cannot be treated as infallible sources of legal authority.[153]

The central question is therefore not whether AI should be accepted or rejected in academic life, but how its use can be governed so that technological assistance strengthens rather than displaces independent reasoning, research integrity and professional responsibility. This calls for a response broader than plagiarism detection or the identification of machine-generated text. It requires a proportionate approach that distinguishes between different kinds of use and addresses verification, intellectual contribution, confidentiality, fairness and accountability. UNESCO's guidance on generative AI in education and research similarly advances a human-centred approach, emphasising data protection, ethical validation and institutional preparedness.[154]

The issue has particular significance for legal education across the Commonwealth. Although Commonwealth jurisdictions share important commitments to the rule of law, human rights and legal education, their institutions operate within different legal systems, languages, resource conditions and technological infrastructures. Ethical principles may be shared, but their implementation must remain attentive to local law and institutional capacity. This Part considers the responsibilities of researchers, students, supervisors, publishers and law schools, with particular attention to legal research, academic assessment and publication. It also explores the scope for a Commonwealth approach that supports responsible innovation while preserving the ethical foundations of scholarship and professional legal practice.

Research Integrity in an AI-Mediated Environment

Research integrity extends beyond avoiding plagiarism. It requires honesty in the representation of evidence, rigour in method, fair engagement with prior scholarship, appropriate acknowledgement and willingness to correct errors. AI can support parts of this process, but a system's capacity to generate an answer is not proof that the answer constitutes reliable knowledge. Outputs may reproduce errors in source material, omit qualifications, invent references or reflect patterns in training data that are poorly suited to the question asked.

The ethical frameworks developed by Luciano Floridi and colleagues, and by Virginia Dignum, emphasise human agency, fairness, explicability and responsibility across the lifecycle of AI systems. Their central implication for academic institutions is that responsibility cannot be left to the technology or addressed only after harm occurs. It must inform decisions about tool selection, permitted uses, data handling, verification and review.[155]

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[153] Varun Magesh, Faiz Surani, et al., "Hallucination-Free? Assessing the Reliability of Leading AI Legal Research Tools" 22(2) *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 216-242 (2025).

[154] Fengchun Miao and Wayne Holmes, *Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research* (UNESCO, Paris, 2023).

[155] Luciano Floridi, et al., "AI4People- An Ethical Framework for a Good AI Society: Opportunities, Risks, Principles, and Recommendations" 28(4) *Minds and Machines* 689-707 (2018); Virginia Dignum, *Responsible Artificial Intelligence: How to Develop and Use AI in a Responsible Way* (Springer, Cham, 2019).

The first obligation is verification. Legal propositions are particularly sensitive to detail: a judgment must be understood in light of its facts, procedural posture, reasoning and subsequent treatment; a statute must be checked in its applicable version; and comparative claims must account for differences in constitutional and institutional context. Researchers should consult authoritative or reliable legal databases, compare quotations with the original, and ensure that each secondary source supports the proposition attributed to it. An AI-generated citation should never be relied upon merely because it appears complete or is returned by a specialist legal product.

Verification is an intellectual task, not a clerical afterthought. The researcher must understand why an authority matters and how it supports the argument. The depth of checking should be proportionate to the consequences of error, but no material legal authority should escape independent scrutiny. Where a proposition cannot be verified, it should be qualified or omitted rather than presented as established fact.

A second concern is bias and the representation of legal knowledge. AI systems are shaped by the data, classifications, design choices and institutional priorities that inform their development. Work by Emily Bender and co-authors cautions against equating fluent language generation with understanding; Kate Crawford situates AI within wider structures of power, extraction and unequal resource distribution. These perspectives are relevant to legal research because some jurisdictions, languages and legal traditions are more extensively digitised and represented than others.[156]

A generated comparative analysis may privilege heavily indexed jurisdictions while overlooking relevant decisions from the Caribbean, Africa, the Pacific or India; customary law, regional-language material and local institutional practice may be rendered less visible. Researchers should therefore ask not only whether an output is accurate, but also which sources and perspectives it excludes. This is especially important when research concerns marginalised communities or seeks to describe the experiences of people whose voices are already underrepresented.

Privacy and confidentiality are equally fundamental. Researchers may handle interview transcripts, personal data, unpublished manuscripts, student records, client material or confidential institutional documents. Access to information does not itself authorise disclosure to an external AI provider. Before submitting material, researchers should consider the purpose for which it was collected, consent and confidentiality commitments, provider terms, retention practices, security controls and applicable institutional rules. De-identification can reduce risk but may not eliminate re-identification, particularly where narratives or contextual details are distinctive.

In India, the constitutional recognition of privacy in *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.)* v. *Union of India* provides an important normative context; applicable data-protection obligations must also be assessed under the law and commencement arrangements in force at the relevant time.[157] Where AI materially changes the processing of human-participant data, supervisors and research ethics committees should consider whether the proposed use remains consistent with consent, approved methods and participant welfare.

Transparency and accountability complete this foundation. A meaningful disclosure should identify the tool's material role for example, in drafting, translation, coding, data analysis or literature mapping while leaving responsibility with the human researcher. Routine spelling assistance may warrant different treatment from AI-generated analysis or substantive drafting. Where AI materially affects method or findings, researchers should record sufficient information about the tool, version, date, prompts or procedures, source materials and validation to make the process intelligible. Documentation should be proportionate and must not itself expose confidential data.

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) maintains that AI tools should not be credited as authors because they cannot accept responsibility for a manuscript. Human authors remain accountable for content produced with AI assistance. Disclosure is therefore necessary where required, but it does not excuse false claims, inadequate verification or a failure to make the intellectual contribution expected of the author.[158]

Responsible AI Use in Legal Research, Writing and Publication

AI can assist with search-term generation, preliminary explanation of unfamiliar concepts, organisation of notes, initial literature mapping and summarisation of lengthy documents. These uses may improve efficiency, particularly for researchers entering a new field or working across languages. The ethical boundary is crossed when preliminary assistance becomes a substitute for independent legal reasoning. A generated literature review may omit important debates; a judgment summary may reproduce the outcome while missing the reasoning; and a comparative account may treat similar language as evidence of equivalent legal rules.

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[156] Emily M. Bender, Timnit Gebru, et al., "On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots: Can Language Models Be Too Big?" in Proceedings of the 2021 *ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency* 610-623 (ACM, 2021); Kate Crawford, *Atlas of AI: Power, Politics, and the Planetary Costs of Artificial Intelligence* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2021).

[157] *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.)* v. *Union of India*, (2017) 10 SCC 1; The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (Act 22 of 2023).

[158] Committee on Publication Ethics, "COPE Position – Authorship and AI", *available at*: https://doi.org/10.24318/cCVRZBms (last visited on October 8, 2026).

The researcher must retain control of the question, method, source selection and argument. AI can help locate or organise material, but it should not be treated as a substitute for reading primary sources and engaging critically with scholarship. This distinction is especially important in doctoral work, where originality depends not merely on producing a coherent text but on demonstrating an independent and defensible contribution to knowledge.

Citation integrity is central to legal scholarship because citations allow readers to test propositions, trace reasoning and evaluate the authority relied upon. AI-assisted work can fail at several points: a case may not exist; a citation may identify the wrong decision; a genuine authority may be described inaccurately; or a source may be cited for a proposition it does not support. Each defect can undermine the argument beyond the footnote itself. Authors should retrieve the cited source, verify quotations and pinpoint references, and read secondary works rather than relying on generated bibliographies. Research by Amanda Head and Sonya Willis on law-student assessment usefully identifies three complementary areas of competence: substantive legal knowledge, knowledge of generative-AI ethics and knowledge of how generative-AI systems operate. This model resists both extremes: assuming that AI should be excluded from all legal learning, or allowing its use without regard to the competencies being assessed.[159]

Authorship should be understood as intellectual contribution coupled with responsibility. The key question is not simply whether AI was used, but what it contributed and whether the human author has performed the intellectual work claimed. Language correction may leave the scholarly contribution intact. By contrast, delegating the formulation of the research question, the critical synthesis of literature, the construction of the argument and the conclusions may displace the very work that the author is expected to undertake. Even transparent disclosure cannot convert work that lacks the required independent contribution into original scholarship.

Literature reviews are especially vulnerable to what may be called synthetic scholarship: a polished synthesis that appears comprehensive without demonstrating engagement with the underlying sources. AI-generated maps may omit less frequently cited authors, misattribute arguments or imply a consensus where disagreement persists. A responsible review begins with recognised bibliographic databases, library catalogues and reliable publication records; the researcher retrieves and reads the relevant works, identifies their arguments and limitations, and determines their significance. AI may help organise notes or suggest relationships, but those relationships must be tested against the literature.

Publication ethics raises additional concerns. Peer reviewers and editors owe duties of confidentiality and independent judgment. Uploading an unpublished manuscript, reviewer report or confidential editorial correspondence to an external platform may violate those duties or the journal's rules. Journals should state whether AI may be used in manuscript preparation, whether disclosure is required, what reviewers may do, and how confidential material is to be protected. AI may assist with permitted administrative or language tasks, but should not replace substantive editorial or peer-review judgment.

AI-detection systems require particular caution, for the reasons examined in Part I. Their outputs should not, by themselves, be treated as conclusive evidence of misconduct. Allegations should be assessed under a clear policy and fair process, considering the work, relevant evidence and the student's or author's explanation. Academic integrity is protected not by substituting one uncertain technical indicator for another, but by transparent expectations, verifiable evidence and reasoned institutional decisions.

Copyright, attribution and data provenance also require attention. Online availability does not automatically permit material to be uploaded, reproduced or adapted. Questions concerning training data, generated outputs and ownership remain legally and jurisdictionally complex. Researchers should respect applicable licences, use authorised resources and acknowledge the intellectual sources of concepts and arguments, even where AI has paraphrased or transformed the original wording. The use of a generative system does not erase the scholarly obligation to credit the ideas on which a work depends.

The World Intellectual Property Organization's work on generative AI and intellectual property identifies questions concerning training inputs, outputs and the interests of creators. For academic practice, the prudent approach is to avoid assumptions about ownership or permission and to assess relevant legal rules, licences and attribution requirements in context.[160]

Academic Integrity and the Responsibilities of Law Schools

Generative AI complicates familiar categories of plagiarism, fabrication, collusion and unauthorised assistance. Text may be generated without copying a single identifiable passage, yet still misrepresent a student's learning if the assessment is intended to test independent legal analysis.

[159] Amanda Head and Sonya Willis, "Assessing Law Students in a GenAI World to Create Knowledgeable Future Lawyers" 31(3) *International Journal of the Legal Profession* 293-310 (2024).
[160] World Intellectual Property Organization, *Generative Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property* (WIPO, Geneva, 2024).

Conversely, AI use is not inherently misconduct: the same tool may be permissible for one task and inappropriate for another. The governing principle should be clarity. Students need to know which uses are allowed, which require disclosure and which would undermine the learning objective.

In India, the University Grants Commission's Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions Regulations, 2018, examined in Part I, provide an important framework for academic integrity, but institutions should not assume that plagiarism rules alone answer every question raised by generative AI.[161] Policies should address fabricated authorities, undisclosed substantive drafting, data protection and the delegation of assessed intellectual work. They should also distinguish intentional deception from careless verification, permitted but inadequately disclosed assistance and minor use within the applicable rules.

Assessment design offers an opportunity to make learning and reasoning more visible. Traditional essays and take-home assignments remain valuable, but may not reveal how a student identified issues, evaluated authorities or developed a conclusion. Law schools can combine written work with staged research proposals, annotated bibliographies, source-verification exercises, reflective explanations of method, oral defence and supervised problem-solving. Students can also be asked to critique an AI-generated answer by locating fabricated authorities, correcting a summary of a judgment or identifying a jurisdictional error. Such exercises test legal knowledge and the ability to evaluate technology rather than merely the ability to produce polished prose.

Reform must remain fair and accessible. Oral or supervised assessment may not suit every student or context; disability accommodations, language differences, class size and institutional capacity matter. Nor should AI-detection tools create a presumption of wrongdoing. Fair assessment requires alignment between the task and the learning outcome, accessible instructions, consistent rules and a credible procedure for resolving concerns.

AI literacy should be treated as a component of professional competence. Future lawyers must understand the limits of AI-generated outputs, verify authorities, protect client confidentiality, recognise bias, disclose material assistance and explain the reasoning behind advice or submissions. A lawyer remains responsible for work produced with technological assistance. These habits should be cultivated during legal education rather than introduced only after entry into practice.

Faculty development is indispensable. Teachers need practical guidance on assessment design, permitted uses, supervision, privacy and fair handling of suspected misconduct. Institutions should provide model disclosure statements, examples of acceptable and unacceptable use, training for faculty and librarians, and clear routes for raising concerns. Individual teachers cannot reasonably be expected to manage systemic technological risks without institutional support.

Governance should be risk-based and periodically reviewed. Classroom brainstorming, doctoral research, confidential legal-clinic work, peer review and the processing of personal data do not carry identical risks. Institutions can distinguish low-risk uses from uses requiring disclosure, prior approval or prohibition. They should assess provider terms, security, data retention, accessibility and the consequences of model updates, and establish processes for reporting errors, correcting research outputs and reviewing incidents.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology's AI Risk Management Framework offers a useful reference for ongoing identification, assessment and management of risk. Its value for universities lies in treating governance as a continuing institutional responsibility rather than a one-time approval of a particular tool.[162]

Access and equity must be addressed alongside integrity. AI may help students understand complex texts, translate materials and organise research, but access to paid tools, reliable connectivity, devices and authoritative databases is uneven. Systems may also perform less effectively in regional languages or on legal materials that are not extensively digitised. Unclear or unenforceable prohibitions may advantage students with private access to sophisticated tools; unrestricted use may reward technological access rather than legal understanding. Institutions should provide clear rules, consider equitable access where feasible and continue investing in libraries, legal databases and research-methods education.

A Commonwealth Approach: Shared Principles, Contextual Implementation

The Commonwealth's diversity makes uniform, detailed rules difficult to apply, but it also creates a strong case for cooperation. Institutions work within different legal systems, languages, resource conditions and data-protection regimes. A policy designed for a well-resourced university cannot simply be transferred to every law school. Cooperation should therefore establish shared ethical commitments while allowing national law and local educational needs to shape implementation.

[161] University Grants Commission, University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018, Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, s. 4, No. 287 (July 31, 2018).
[162] National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework* (AI RMF 1.0) (NIST, January 2023).

The Commonwealth Charter's commitments to human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance provide a normative context for this discussion, although the Charter is not a detailed code for AI-assisted research. UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the OECD AI Principles likewise offer international policy reference points; their role is complementary to, not a substitute for, applicable domestic law and institutional rules.[163]

A workable framework should operate at several connected levels. At the foundational level are human rights and constitutional values, including privacy, equality and access to education. International recommendations provide shared principles; risk-management standards assist with institutional assessment; national law determines applicable legal obligations; and university, journal and research-ethics policies translate these commitments into procedures. At the level of individual practice, researchers remain responsible for source verification, confidentiality, attribution and disclosure of material AI use.

Commonwealth cooperation could support model policies, shared teaching materials, faculty development, collaborative evaluation of legal AI tools and comparative research into AI-assisted professional practice. It could also help institutions with fewer resources access training and open educational materials. Capacity-building should extend beyond learning how to operate commercial platforms: it must include the ability to recognise limitations, verify claims, understand data-protection duties and decide when not to use AI.

Institutional autonomy and technological dependence also deserve consideration. Reliance on a small number of commercial providers may affect cost, access, continuity and the control of research data. Responsible innovation therefore means building the capacity for informed choice, not making one platform indispensable to effective legal education. Shared commitments should be practical, periodically reviewed and open to evaluation as systems, provider practices and legal frameworks evolve.

Issues for Deliberation

- How should law schools distinguish permissible AI assistance from the delegation of intellectual work, and how should legal assessments preserve independent reasoning and critical evaluation?
- What minimum standards of verification and disclosure should govern AI use in legal research, writing and publication, particularly concerning case citations, statutory references, quotations and AI-generated content?
- What safeguards should govern the use of AI with confidential information, research-participant data and unpublished manuscripts, and how can institutions ensure fair investigation of suspected AI-related misconduct?
- What common principles should guide law schools, journals and publishers on academic integrity, AI authorship, disclosure, peer review, accountability and correction of AI-related errors?
- How can Commonwealth institutions address inequalities in access to AI tools and reliable legal resources, and should they develop shared principles or model policies for the responsible use of AI in legal education and research?

Conclusion

Research ethics and the responsible use of artificial intelligence are now central to the future of legal education. AI can widen access to legal knowledge, support multilingual learning and assist researchers in managing complex tasks. Those benefits, however, do not remove the obligations of independent reasoning, accurate citation, respect for intellectual contributions, protection of research participants and professional accountability. In legal scholarship, where a single fabricated authority or distorted account of precedent can compromise an argument, verification is inseparable from research integrity.

The challenge is to move beyond a binary choice between prohibition and uncritical adoption. Responsible use requires clear and proportionate policies, transparent disclosure of material assistance, secure data practices, fair assessment, informed faculty and risk-based institutional governance. It also requires attention to the unequal distribution of technological resources and to the possibility that systems may reproduce jurisdictional, linguistic and social exclusions.

The distinction that should guide practice is between using AI as an aid and treating it as an authority. AI-generated material may provide a starting point, but legal knowledge must be established through reliable sources, critical engagement and reasoned judgment. The person who submits, publishes or relies upon the work must remain answerable for it.

[163] *The Commonwealth Charter* (adopted December 14, 2012; entered into force March 11, 2013); UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (UNESCO, Paris, 2021); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence*, OECD/LEGAL/0449 (adopted May 22, 2019, as amended in 2024).

PART V - REIMAGINING AND REFORMULATING LEGAL AID CLINICS IN LAW SCHOOLS / CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Technical Session V · 22 November 2026 · 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

> *Part V looks outward. The earlier Parts are concerned mainly with what happens inside the law school. Part V considers the law school's obligations to the communities around it and to the profession after graduation. Part III examined clinical method as a way of teaching. Part V examines the legal aid clinic as a community-facing institution, grounded in Article 39A and the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. It proposes that the clinic also serve as a site of continuing legal education, where students, teachers, practitioners and legal services authorities learn from one another.*

Introduction

Access to justice is a foundational requirement of a constitutional democracy. The existence of legal rights, statutory remedies, and judicial institutions does not, by itself, ensure that individuals can understand, assert, or enforce those rights. For persons experiencing poverty, social exclusion, limited legal awareness, geographical isolation, or institutional disadvantage, the distance between the formal promise of law and its practical accessibility may remain considerable. Legal aid, therefore, must be understood not merely as the provision of representation in individual cases, but as part of a broader institutional commitment to making justice accessible, intelligible, and effective.

Within this framework, law schools occupy a distinctive position. They are not only institutions for transmitting legal doctrine and preparing future advocates; they are also centres of research, professional formation, public engagement, and critical examination of the justice system. Their legal aid clinics can connect the classroom with the lived experiences of communities, enabling students to understand how legal rules operate in practice while contributing, within appropriate professional and supervisory boundaries, to public legal awareness and access to remedies.

The constitutional foundation for this responsibility is particularly significant in India. Article 14 guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws, while Article 21 protects life and personal liberty.[164] Article 39A directs the State to ensure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid, through suitable legislation, schemes, or other means, so that opportunities for securing justice are not denied because of economic or other disabilities. These provisions establish an important normative relationship between equality, fair procedure, and access to legal assistance.

The Supreme Court has reinforced this relationship in its legal-aid jurisprudence. In *Hussainara Khatoon* v. *State of Bihar*,[165] the Court recognised the constitutional importance of free legal services for persons unable to secure legal representation. In *Khatri* (II) v. *State of Bihar*,[166] it further emphasised the State's obligation to provide legal assistance in circumstances engaging the rights of indigent accused persons. These decisions demonstrate that access to legal assistance is not a peripheral welfare concern, but an essential element of a justice system committed to fairness.

Yet the constitutional and judicial recognition of legal aid raises a further institutional question: how should legal education contribute to the realisation of these commitments? Legal aid clinics provide one possible answer. Properly designed, they can facilitate legal literacy, preliminary assistance, supervised research, referral to competent legal-service providers, community engagement, and experiential learning. They can also help students appreciate the ethical obligations of legal professionals and the social consequences of legal institutions.

The difficulty lies in ensuring that such clinics function as more than formal institutional requirements or occasional outreach activities. A clinic's existence does not automatically establish its accessibility, effectiveness, pedagogical value, or responsiveness to community needs. Its contribution depends on the quality of supervision, continuity of services, institutional support, coordination with legal services authorities, and the capacity to evaluate outcomes

[164] The Constitution of India, arts. 14, 21 and 39A.

[165] *Hussainara Khatoon* v. *State of Bihar*, AIR 1979 SC 1369.

[166] *Khatri (II)* v. *State of Bihar* (1981) 1 SCC 627.

This Part examines how legal aid clinics in Indian law schools may be reimagined as sustainable institutions at the intersection of clinical legal education, access to justice, community legal services, and continuing legal education. It considers the existing legal and regulatory framework, the educational and institutional purposes of clinics, the obstacles that may constrain their effectiveness, and possible reforms for strengthening their contribution to the justice system.

The central proposition is that legal aid clinics should be conceived not simply as student activities, but as supervised, accountable, community-responsive institutions that connect legal education with the practical delivery of justice and the continuing development of legal professionals.

Conceptualising Legal Aid Clinics and Clinical Legal Education

Legal aid clinics and clinical legal education are closely related, but they are not interchangeable concepts. Legal aid clinics ordinarily focus on providing or facilitating legal assistance, information, awareness, or referral services for people who need support. Clinical legal education is a broader pedagogical approach through which students learn law by engaging with practical legal problems, supervised client interactions, simulated exercises, research, drafting, advocacy, and reflection on professional responsibility.

The relationship between these two concepts is especially important in the Indian context. A clinic may serve the community without being fully integrated into the curriculum; equally, a clinical course may develop practical legal skills without operating as a continuing community-facing legal service. An effective institutional model must therefore recognise both purposes and establish a meaningful connection between them.

Clinical legal education enables students to move beyond the study of legal rules in the abstract. A problem involving unpaid wages, access to welfare benefits, domestic violence, tenancy, consumer rights, or documentation may require students to identify the relevant law, understand the client's circumstances, assess jurisdiction and available remedies, communicate in accessible language, and recognise when a matter must be referred to a qualified practitioner or statutory authority. Such experiences can reveal the difference between knowing a legal rule and understanding how to use it responsibly.

Published scholarship on Indian law-school clinics has identified a persistent concern: the aspirations associated with clinical legal education have not always translated into consistent institutional practice. K. Rajashree and Sonika Bhardwaj, examining Indian law-school legal aid clinics, discuss the gap between the intended educational and social purposes of clinics and the varied ways in which those purposes are implemented.[167] Their analysis is relevant to reform because it directs attention away from the mere existence of a clinic and towards its institutional design, educational objectives, and actual functioning.

Sital Kalantry has also argued that clinical legal education can contribute simultaneously to practical skills development, access to legal services, and democratic engagement.[168] This perspective broadens the rationale for legal aid clinics: their value lies not only in the immediate assistance provided in individual matters, but also in the capacity to develop socially responsive legal professionals who understand the experiences of communities different from their own.

Frank S. Bloch and Iqbal S. Ishar, in their comparative study of India and the United States, examine the relationship between legal aid, public service, and clinical legal education.[169] Their work highlights a central institutional question: how should law schools balance the educational purposes of clinical programmes with their responsibilities towards communities requiring legal assistance?

These approaches suggest that a reimagined clinic should rest on three mutually reinforcing functions. First, it should serve as an accessible point for preliminary legal information, assistance, and referral. Second, it should provide a structured environment for supervised experiential learning. Third, it should generate research and institutional knowledge about barriers to justice, patterns of unmet legal need, and possible improvements to legal-service delivery. A clinic designed around these combined functions would be more than a room, committee, or extracurricular programme. It would be a sustained institutional arrangement through which legal knowledge is applied, professional competence is developed, and community needs inform legal education.

[167] K. Rajashree and Sonika Bhardwaj, "India's Law School Legal Aid Clinics: The Gaps Between Aspiration and Practice" 28(2) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* (2021), *available at*: https://doi.org/10.19164/ijcle.v28i2.1183.

[168] Sital Kalantry, "Promoting Clinical Legal Education and Democracy in India" 8 *NUJS Law Review* 1 (2015), *available at*: https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/facpub/1485/.

[169] Frank S. Bloch and Iqbal S. Ishar, "Legal Aid, Public Service and Clinical Legal Education: Future Directions from India and the United States" 12 *Michigan Journal of International Law* 92 (1990), *available at*: https://repository.law.umich.edu/mjil/vol12/iss1/3/.

The Constitutional and Statutory Framework for Legal Aid Clinics in India

The development of legal aid clinics must be situated within India's existing constitutional and statutory framework. The Constitution establishes the normative foundation for equal access to justice, while legislation, regulatory rules, and institutional schemes provide mechanisms through which legal assistance and clinical education may be organised.

Article 39A of the Constitution is particularly relevant because it links the administration of justice with equal opportunity and directs the State to provide free legal aid. Read alongside Articles 14 and 21, it supports an understanding of legal aid as part of a wider commitment to equality and fair procedure. The practical challenge, however, is to translate these constitutional principles into accessible services, effective institutional arrangements, and meaningful public awareness.

The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 provides the principal statutory framework for legal services in India. Its purpose is to establish legal services authorities and ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied because of economic or other disabilities. Section 4(k) is of particular significance to law schools: it expressly provides for the development of clinical legal education programmes in consultation with the Bar Council of India and for promoting, guiding, and supervising legal services clinics in universities, law colleges, and other institutions.[170] This provision gives legal aid clinics a direct statutory connection to the institutional responsibilities of legal education.

The National Legal Services Authority (Legal Aid Clinics) Regulations, 2011 provide a more specific framework. Regulation 24 addresses clinics attached to law colleges, law universities, and other institutions. It permits such institutions to establish legal services clinics as part of clinical legal education, requires them to inform the State Legal Services Authority, and provides for technical assistance and promotion by that authority. It also contemplates the participation of final-year law students under faculty supervision.[171]

The Bar Council of India's Rules of Legal Education, 2008 also address legal aid clinics. Clause 11 of Schedule III, concerning institutional facilities, requires legal education institutions to establish and run a legal aid clinic under the supervision of a senior faculty member, with final-year students participating in cooperation with legal aid authorities, voluntary lawyers, and relevant non-governmental organisations.[172]

Taken together, these instruments establish an important foundation. Legal aid clinics are not merely optional expressions of institutional goodwill: they form part of the recognised relationship between legal education and the provision of legal services. At the same time, the existence of formal requirements does not, on its own, establish the quality of clinical teaching, the regularity of community engagement, or the effectiveness of assistance delivered.

The principal reform question is therefore not simply whether law schools should establish clinics. It is how the existing framework can be implemented more consistently, supported adequately, and developed to accommodate contemporary needs without compromising professional standards or the rights of people seeking assistance.

From Formal Compliance to Meaningful Clinical Practice

A central challenge in reformulating legal aid clinics is the potential gap between institutional establishment and substantive functioning. A clinic may have a designated room, a faculty coordinator, student members, and an annual calendar of activities, yet still lack the resources or procedures required to provide continuous and effective assistance.

This distinction is important because a clinic's success cannot be measured solely by the number of legal awareness camps organised, brochures distributed, or students enrolled in its activities. Those indicators may reflect effort, but they do not necessarily establish whether community members obtained accurate information, reached the appropriate legal services authority, understood their available remedies, or received timely assistance.

The concerns identified by Rajashree and Bhardwaj about the diversity of clinic practices and the gap between their intended purposes and actual implementation reinforce the need for institutional clarity.[173] The problem is not that all existing clinics are ineffective, but that their objectives, resources, methods, and integration into legal education may vary considerably. A reformed model should therefore begin with a clear statement of purpose. Every clinic should identify the services it is competent to provide, the communities it intends to reach, the legal and ethical limits of student participation, and the mechanisms through which matters beyond its capacity will be referred. Such clarity would reduce the risk of clinics becoming primarily symbolic structures.

[170] The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, s. 4(k).
[171] National Legal Services Authority (Legal Aid Clinics) Regulations, 2011, reg. 24.
[172] Bar Council of India, *Rules of Legal Education, 2008*, sch. III, cl. 11.
[173] Rajashree and Bhardwaj, *supra*.

Continuity is equally important. Community legal needs do not arise according to an academic calendar. A person facing an eviction, an unpaid wage claim, a documentation problem, or a deadline in legal proceedings may require assistance when students are on vacation or a faculty coordinator is unavailable. Clinics consequently need arrangements for maintaining contact, preserving records securely, and referring urgent matters to qualified professionals. This does not mean that law schools must independently provide every form of legal representation. Rather, their responsibility should be understood as part of a coordinated legal-service network. Clinics can undertake preliminary information gathering, legal literacy, supervised research, basic guidance within authorised limits, and referrals to competent lawyers or legal services authorities.

The distinction between student learning and client service must remain explicit. A client's problem should never be treated merely as an educational exercise. Clinical learning must be organised around the client's interests, informed participation, confidentiality, and appropriate professional supervision.

Reimagining the Educational Function of Legal Aid Clinics

Clinical legal education provides a means of integrating practical legal skills with doctrinal study. Its value lies in allowing students to examine how law operates in real situations, where facts may be incomplete, clients may have limited legal knowledge, and remedies may depend on procedural requirements or institutional cooperation.

The traditional classroom is indispensable for understanding statutes, precedents, legal theory, and constitutional principles. However, practical competence also requires interviewing, identifying relevant facts, communicating legal information, drafting documents, evaluating remedies, managing professional responsibilities, and recognising the limits of one's competence.

A well-designed clinic can bring these elements together. Students may, for example, examine a community complaint involving unpaid wages. Under faculty supervision, they could identify relevant legislation, prepare an accessible explanation of potential remedies, determine whether the matter requires referral, and reflect on the practical obstacles confronting the complainant. The exercise would develop legal reasoning and communication skills while keeping the community member's needs central.

Kalantry's work on clinical legal education and democracy offers a further dimension to this approach. By bringing students into meaningful contact with people whose social and economic circumstances differ from their own, clinics can help cultivate empathy, democratic understanding, and awareness of structural inequalities.[174] These outcomes are not automatic; they depend on thoughtful supervision, respectful engagement, and structured reflection.

Clinical education should therefore be integrated into the curriculum rather than left entirely to voluntary participation; Part III sets out models for doing so. Possible mechanisms include assessed clinical credits, supervised case studies, reflective journals, legal research projects, drafting exercises, community placements, and structured evaluation of student performance.

Assessment should focus on the quality of legal analysis, ethical judgement, communication, procedural understanding, and reflection, not merely on attendance or the number of cases handled. This would help establish clinics as serious educational institutions while preserving their service-oriented purpose.

Continuing Legal Education and the Need for an Intergenerational Model

The reference to continuing legal education broadens the proposed reform beyond law students. Legal aid clinics can become collaborative spaces where students, faculty members, practising advocates, legal services authorities, and other relevant professionals contribute to ongoing professional learning.

Continuing legal education is important because the law, legal procedures, social welfare schemes, and institutional practices evolve. Practitioners may benefit from updated knowledge of emerging legislation, digital systems, alternative dispute resolution, legal technology, trauma-informed communication, and developments in access-to-justice research. Students, in turn, benefit from the practical experience and professional judgement of practising lawyers.

A structured partnership could involve periodic workshops conducted by practising advocates, joint training with district legal services authorities, supervised case discussions, and continuing professional-development sessions on subjects identified through the clinic's work. Faculty members could use recurring problems encountered by the clinic to develop research projects, teaching materials, and proposals for institutional improvement.

[174] Kalantry, *supra*.

The clinic could also facilitate collaboration between legal professionals and community organisations. For example, a clinic working with labourers might identify recurring difficulties in accessing wage remedies. Practitioners could provide training on the relevant procedures, while students undertake supervised legal research and community education. The resulting insights could inform further training and improve the clinic's referral arrangements.

Such a model must, however, be designed within the applicable professional and regulatory framework. A law-school clinic should not be assumed to possess the authority to undertake every form of legal representation, nor should student participation be treated as a substitute for qualified professional assistance. The purpose of continuing legal education should be to improve competence and coordination, not to blur professional responsibilities.

Bloch and Ishar's comparative discussion of legal aid and clinical legal education is relevant here because it highlights the relationship between public service and the educational objectives of clinical programmes.[175] The challenge is to preserve both dimensions: clinics must remain responsive to community needs while providing rigorous, supervised professional learning.

Institutional Challenges and Barriers to Effective Implementation

Several interconnected issues require attention if legal aid clinics are to become sustainable and effective.

First, faculty capacity and supervision. Clinical teaching demands time and specialised skills. Faculty members may already carry substantial teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. Without sufficient workload recognition, training, and institutional support, clinical supervision risks becoming irregular or overly dependent on individual initiative.

Second, financial and infrastructural constraints. Effective clinics require more than a designated room. They may need accessible premises, communication facilities, secure records management, local travel support, translation and interpretation, community outreach, and appropriate technology. Institutions with limited resources may struggle to maintain these functions without dedicated funding or external partnerships.

Third, weak institutional coordination. The statutory framework envisages interaction between educational institutions and legal services authorities, but cooperation must be translated into workable arrangements. Unclear referral procedures, inconsistent communication, and limited access to practising lawyers may weaken the connection between preliminary assistance and formal legal remedies.

Fourth, ethical and professional safeguards. Clinics must establish protocols for confidentiality, informed consent, conflicts of interest, data protection, record retention, and referrals. Students should understand when they must refrain from giving definitive advice and seek faculty or professional intervention. Sensitive matters involving violence, children, criminal proceedings, or urgent deadlines require particular care.

Fifth, accessibility and community trust. A clinic located on a university campus may remain difficult to reach for rural residents, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, or individuals unable to attend during academic hours. Language barriers and unfamiliarity with institutional processes may further discourage participation. Community engagement must therefore be designed around users' circumstances rather than the convenience of the institution alone.

Sixth, limited evaluation. Counting activities is easier than assessing their outcomes. Yet without meaningful evaluation, institutions may have little basis for determining which services work, which communities remain underserved, or which reforms deserve additional resources.

These challenges should not be treated as reasons to reduce the ambition of legal aid clinics. They instead demonstrate why reform must address governance, funding, supervision, partnerships, and accountability together.

A Framework for Reform: From the Traditional Clinic to an Integrated Justice Institution

Reform should proceed through a coordinated institutional model rather than isolated activities. The objective should be to create clinics that are educationally rigorous, professionally supervised, accessible to communities, and accountable for their performance.

Curriculum-integrated clinical legal education

Law schools should establish a clearly defined clinical component within their academic programmes. Students could undertake supervised legal research, client interviewing exercises, legal literacy projects, drafting assignments, and structured community placements. Assessment criteria should reward legal reasoning, ethical judgement, accuracy, communication, and reflective learning.

[175] Bloch and Ishar, *supra*.

Formal partnerships with legal services authorities

Each clinic should develop a practical working arrangement with the relevant State or District Legal Services Authority. This could specify referral procedures, training support, access to panel advocates where appropriate, community outreach, escalation of urgent matters, and periodic review meetings.

Such arrangements would give practical effect to the coordination envisaged by the existing statutory and regulatory framework.

Dedicated supervision and institutional accountability

Clinics should have a designated faculty coordinator, a defined supervisory structure, and documented operating procedures. Institutions should recognise clinical supervision as part of academic workload and provide training in interviewing, professional ethics, safeguarding, referral practice, and community engagement.

Continuing legal education partnerships

Practising advocates, retired judicial officers where appropriate, legal services authorities, academics, and subject specialists could contribute to regular professional-development sessions. Training priorities should be informed by recurring legal problems encountered by the clinic and developments in the law.

Community-responsive outreach

Outreach should be developed in consultation with local communities and organisations. Clinics could conduct legal literacy programmes, maintain accessible consultation hours, prepare materials in relevant languages, and arrange community visits where feasible. Particular attention should be paid to people who face geographical, economic, linguistic, or disability-related barriers.

Digital access with appropriate safeguards

Digital systems could support appointment scheduling, referral tracking, legal information, and communication with clients. However, technology should supplement rather than displace accessible in-person services. Any digital system must protect confidentiality, restrict access to sensitive information, and avoid creating barriers for people without reliable internet access or digital literacy.

Evaluation based on meaningful outcomes

Institutions should assess both educational and service-related outcomes. Relevant indicators might include the regularity of clinic operations, the quality and timeliness of referrals, student competency development, community feedback, confidentiality compliance, and the proportion of matters successfully connected to an appropriate service provider.

These indicators should be interpreted carefully. A clinic's performance cannot be judged solely by the number of disputes resolved, because the complexity of matters and the clinic's actual role will vary. Evaluation should examine the quality, accessibility, and appropriateness of the assistance provided.

International Perspectives and Comparative Lessons

International standards offer useful principles for designing legal aid institutions, although their legal scope must be distinguished from the regulatory requirements applicable to Indian law schools.

The United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, adopted by the General Assembly in Resolution 67/187, emphasise access to legal aid, the responsibilities of States, and the need for effective systems of assistance in criminal justice.[176] These principles are not a comprehensive regulatory code for every law-school clinic, but they provide a valuable reference point for questions of accessibility, quality, and institutional responsibility.

Comparative clinical legal education scholarship also highlights the potential of law schools to connect practical training with public service. The work of Bloch and Ishar on India and the United States demonstrates that the relationship between legal aid and clinical education can be organised in different ways, with implications for both professional training and service delivery.[177] Kalantry's analysis further suggests that clinical programmes can strengthen democratic understanding by exposing students to the lived realities of legal inequality.[178]

[176] United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, UNGA Res 67/187, UN Doc A/RES/67/187 (20 December 2012).

[177] Bloch and Ishar, *supra*.

[178] Kalantry, *supra*.

The appropriate lesson is not that India should reproduce a foreign model without modification. Indian clinics operate within a distinctive constitutional, statutory, educational, and professional framework. Comparative experience is most useful when it helps identify workable principles: supervised experiential learning, sustained institutional support, meaningful community engagement, professional accountability, and evaluation of educational and service outcomes.

Any reform should therefore be adapted to the powers of Indian legal services authorities, the Bar Council of India's regulatory framework, and the varying capacities of universities and law colleges. The aim should be a locally grounded model that learns from international experience while responding to India's own legal needs and institutional conditions.

Future Directions: Towards a Sustainable and Accountable Model

The future of legal aid clinics depends on whether law schools treat them as enduring institutional responsibilities rather than occasional outreach programmes.

A sustainable model would combine three dimensions. The first is access to justice, through legal awareness, preliminary assistance, appropriate referrals, and collaboration with competent legal-service providers. The second is professional formation, through supervised practical learning, ethical training, and continuing legal education. The third is institutional learning, through research, documentation, evaluation, and engagement with recurring barriers to justice.

These dimensions reinforce one another. Community engagement exposes students to practical problems; supervised clinical work develops professional competence; research helps identify systemic difficulties; and continuing education enables practitioners and institutions to respond to changing legal needs.

Implementation should nevertheless be proportionate to institutional capacity. A smaller law college may begin with regular supervised clinic hours, a clear referral protocol, and a formal relationship with its District Legal Services Authority. A larger university may develop specialised clinics, research partnerships, digital referral systems, and structured continuing-education programmes. Common minimum standards can coexist with institutional flexibility.

The proposed transformation should also preserve the distinction between legal information and professional legal advice, between student learning and client representation, and between a clinic's own work and the functions of statutory legal services authorities. These boundaries are essential to protecting the interests of people who seek assistance.

Ultimately, reimagining legal aid clinics requires a shift in institutional perspective. The clinic should not be regarded simply as a facility maintained to satisfy an educational requirement. It should be recognised as a space where constitutional commitments, legal knowledge, professional responsibility, and community experience can interact in a structured and accountable manner.

If law schools can build this relationship through adequate supervision, sustainable funding, effective partnerships, and meaningful evaluation, legal aid clinics can make a stronger contribution both to legal education and to the broader objective of ensuring that access to justice is not determined by a person's economic or social position.

The collaborative efforts of law schools, legal services authorities, practising advocates, educators, and community organisations will be essential in realising this objective. In that context, the following questions merit further deliberation.

Questions for Deliberation

- What minimum standards of supervision, opening hours, record-keeping, confidentiality and referral should every law-school legal aid clinic meet, and who should monitor compliance?
- How should the working relationship between law-school clinics and State and District Legal Services Authorities be formalised, so that preliminary assistance leads reliably to qualified representation?
- How should clinical supervision be recognised in faculty workload and funded on a sustainable basis, particularly in smaller law colleges?
- What role should law schools play in continuing legal education, and how can the recurring problems seen in clinics shape its content?
- Which outcome indicators should clinics record and report, and how can Commonwealth institutions share data, models and training materials on clinical practice?

PART VI - COMMON THREADS, THE BLUEPRINT ON LEGAL EDUCATION AND THE HYDERABAD STATEMENT

Plenary Session · Sunday, 22 November 2026 · 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM · Valedictory Ceremony · Sunday, 22 November 2026 · 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

What the Conversations Share

Read together, the Introduction and the five Parts of this paper describe one transition in legal education. They approach it from different points: the purpose of the law school, the examination hall, the footnote, the core subject, the research project and the community clinic. They nonetheless reach strikingly similar conclusions.

Accountability cannot be delegated. Courts in England and Wales, Canada, India, Singapore and New South Wales have said in different words that a lawyer remains answerable for every authority cited and every proposition advanced, whatever tool produced it (Introduction). The same principle governs the student who submits an assessment (Part I), the author whose citation must lead to a real source (Part II), and the researcher and journal for whom an AI system can never be an author (Part IV). Legal education must teach this accountability as a habit, before the profession has to enforce it as a rule.

Reasoning must be made visible. Each Part looks for ways to show how a conclusion was reached, not only what the conclusion is. Part I proposes assessment that values process, oral explanation and the critique of machine-generated answers. Part III proposes reflective journals, published rubrics and supervisor feedback in clinical work. Part IV proposes proportionate records of how AI was used in research. The common point is that the work that matters most is the work that a tool cannot do for the student.

Equity is a design requirement. Commercial research platforms, AI subscriptions, low supervision ratios and travel budgets are unevenly distributed across the Commonwealth. Detection software penalises writers of English as an additional language (Part I). Citation rules can disadvantage authors without access to authorised reports (Part II). AI tools perform least well on the legal systems that are least digitised (Part IV). Legal aid clinics on university campuses can be hardest to reach for those who most need them (Part V). Every proposal in this paper has therefore been tested against the conditions of the large public law college as well as the well-resourced national law university.

Reform should be staged and evaluated. No Part recommends a sudden or uniform change. The Introduction proposes staged curricular reform; Part II a common core in place of a single code; Part III integration in two or three subjects first, with built-in evaluation; Part V common minimum standards with room for institutional variation. Each also asks for evidence. The Indian debate on clinical education, in particular, has been carried on for decades with very few published evaluations, and the Conference can help change that.

Shared principles, local implementation. Finally, every Part treats the diversity of the Commonwealth as a condition to work with, not a problem to overcome. The Conference does not need to agree on one curriculum, one citation guide, one AI policy or one clinic model. It needs to agree on the commitments that make such arrangements comparable, trustworthy and open to exchange.

The motto of the Conference, *Tradition in Thought, Transformation in Learning*, captures the balance this paper has tried to keep. The tradition at stake is not a particular syllabus or style of teaching. It is the discipline of reasoning from authoritative sources, the obligation to deal honestly with evidence, and the professional duty owed to clients, courts and the public. Those commitments are what legal education must carry forward. Almost everything else, including how students are taught and assessed, how sources are cited, how clinics are organised and how lawyers keep learning, is open to transformation and should be changed where change serves them better.

Hosted in India, home to one of the Commonwealth's oldest and most distinctive legal and pedagogical traditions, the Conference treats globalisation as a two-way exchange. Indian legal education has much to contribute, including the national law university model, a statutory legal aid system with a recognised place for law-school clinics, a Supreme Court that has adopted neutral citation, and current experiments in plain-language drafting. It also has much to learn from the experience of other Commonwealth jurisdictions. The Conference's deliberations, the blueprint that CLEA's committee will prepare, and the Hyderabad Statement can together give practical content to the conviction that the Commonwealth's legal systems are strongest when they learn from one another and keep their own character.

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