



University  
of Exeter  
Law  
School

## ALT 2026: Full Abstracts

**Thursday 16 April 2026**

### **Employability, Skills and the Future 1:**

Jane Bryan, Victoria Harris, and Emma McAndry, 'Embedding mediation awareness and skills in legal education to enhance employability and student wellbeing' (online)

Mediation is becoming an increasingly important part of dispute resolution and legal practice, following high-profile cases such as *Churchill v Merthyr Tydfil Council* [2023]. In this session, Professor Jane Bryan (Warwick Law School), Emma McAndry (award-winning mediator and mediation trainer, Fellow of the Civil Mediation Council and founder/director of Essential Mediation Solutions) and Victoria Harris (CEO of the Civil Mediation Council) will:

1. Reflect on the importance of mediation in current legal practice and the need to embed this knowledge within the education of future lawyers and professionals
2. Consider how we can prepare our future lawyers to engage with mediation to enhance its potential benefits to them and their clients
3. Give an overview of key mediation skills and how research has shown they enhance the education of future lawyers - helping them redress some of the biases of traditional legal training
4. Provide a case study of the peer mediation clinic established at Warwick University by Jane and Emma, Warwick Mediation, which has enhanced the employability and skills of student mediators and provided wellbeing benefits to students engaging in mediation, enhancing student retention, performance and satisfaction and was shortlisted for the Times Higher Education Award 2025.
5. Outline the support available from the Civil Mediation Council's Academic Forum (chaired by Professor Bryan) and the Alternative Dispute Resolution Research Network (organised by the CMC) to institutions and individuals wishing to embed/encourage mediation awareness, research and skills within their context.

Laura McBrien and Hermione Hague, 'Reimagining Legal Education: Enhancing Student Interviewing Skills through AI-Powered Simulation'

In response to the evolving demands of the legal profession, our institution has developed [ClientConnectEd](#), a client interview simulation tool powered by AI, to support the development of essential interviewing skills for law students. This innovation aligns with the conference theme by leveraging technology to enhance experiential learning, providing practice opportunities with complex bespoke contextual scenarios to better prepare students for the complexities of legal practice. This tool also features as an essential bridge to prepare students to meet clients in our Free Legal Advice Centre, our community-focused access to justice service. The tool provides immediate AI-generated feedback to ensure just-in-time skills development and is integrated into teaching so the student and the tutor are at the centre of the skills development programme. The ClientConnectEd app has been successfully piloted as part of our Diploma in Professional Legal Practice programme. We will share a demonstration of the ClientConnectEd app and our experiences and feedback from the pilot, highlighting the potential of ClientConnectEd to support the development of "next-gen" legal skills, including digital literacy and human-centred lawyering. By exploring the intersection of technology, pedagogy, and practice, this presentation will contribute to the conference's focus on pedagogical innovations and the development of emerging skills and competencies in legal education, along with facilitating a broader discussion on how AI can be utilised to support skills-based teaching.

Matthew Parry and Sophie Hill, 'Developing Communication Skills Through Competition'

Encouraging the development, through intra and inter varsity competition, of what have been traditionally called soft skills has been a central part of international legal education, particularly in the USA, for decades. Both the recognition of these communication skills as part of the curricular or co-curricular studies and the range of competitions have been far slower in the United Kingdom. As recently as 2007, there were a handful of domestic mooted competitions, and individual competitions for client interviewing and negotiations but it was likely that all but a handful of students would have graduated from law school with no knowledge or awareness of these opportunities.

The situation now is very different. Either through faculty or student societies, most law schools have provision for inter-varsity competition at least in mooted and often also in trial advocacy, client interviewing, mediation, and negotiations. There are multiple inter-varsity competitions in all these skills, and the increased use of online platforms since the Covid 19 pandemic has opened up the geographic borders. By way of example, the Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law Communication Skills Programme sent teams to 28 inter-varsity competitions in the 2024/2025 academic year.

The acceleration of these opportunities, however, has led to an inevitable varying in quality of experience for students, particularly in respect of the support provided by law schools to their students. This has been intensified by the current financial conditions in Higher Education with law schools often restricting funding for the students to participate in these competitions, with the potential for their experience to be adversely affected.

This is an area that has been lacking research data, with most studies being focused on a single University or cohort. To fill this gap, the authors organised a survey to gain an understanding of three key questions:

- What do students seek to gain from these competitions,
- What are their expectations from law schools in terms of financial support, and
- What do they perceive their law schools gain from their participation.

Analysing the data has allowed us to provide a justified and reasonable relationship between law students and law schools for the participation in inter-varsity competitions, notwithstanding the financial constraints, and this presentation will focus on emphasising the following points:

1. Broadbent's perspective that "Mooting is best conceived...not as a skill in its own right but rather as a complex amalgam of intellectual, interpersonal and presentational skills" is reinforced and that students see these skills as important and useful to their development.
2. While there is an expectation of financial support from Universities to participate in these competitions, there is a recognition that the burden should be shared between Universities, supporting law organisations, and students.
3. There is a strong potential for Universities to gain from participation in these competitions, beyond the development of their own students' skill

The three authors all have heavy involvement in the Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law Communication Skills Programme. Matthew founded the Programme in 2018, while Sophie is a practicing barrister and joined the law school staff in 2023, being a key part of the Programme since then. We will be joined by a student who will be able to give their perspective: the identify will be confirmed once an internal funding related interview process is complete.

Alex Nicholson, 'Valuable legal education and aspiring human lawyers'

In a world of increasingly intelligent machines, how can we ensure legal education remains “valuable”? Most students who choose to study law do so because they see it as their route into the legal profession, and universities have become financially reliant on this ambition. Yet legal educators are deeply divided on whether a law degree should serve primarily as preparation for practice or as a broader public good, and this lack of consensus has made it difficult for law schools to articulate a coherent vision of value. Meanwhile, the massification and marketisation of higher education are placing pressure on law schools to focus on the kinds of knowledge and skills that machines can now replicate. In England and Wales, this narrowing of focus is reinforced by the Solicitors Qualifying Examination through its heavy emphasis on recalling and applying established rules of law. In this paper, I will draw on my own research on the value of legal education that I have conducted over the last few years, to explore what all of this means for educating lawyers in the age of generative artificial intelligence. I will argue that human lawyers remain essential to the future of justice, but that the nature of legal work will soon be fundamentally transformed, demanding professionals who are critical thinkers, interdisciplinary, technologically-literate, and who understand humanity. This lecture sets out a manifesto for a future of legal education that preserves and enhances what is valuable, both for aspiring human lawyers and for society more broadly.

## **AI and Teaching Practice 1**

Christopher Kirkbride, 'The Algorithmic Lecturer: Assessing the Validity of AI-Driven Grading and Feedback in Undergraduate Trusts Law'

Despite the integration of AI into higher education, its potential for use in high-stakes academic assessment, particularly in legal education, remains critically underexplored. This paper presents research investigating the potential for large language models, specifically Microsoft Copilot, Google NotebookLM, and Google Gemini, accurately to grade and provide substantive feedback on undergraduate Trusts Law assessments, benchmarking their performance against an experienced human academic marker.

The study draws a comparison across two distinct assessment formats from an undergraduate Trusts Law module: an authentic assessment designed to assess practical legal application, and a typical problem-style question demanding traditional doctrinal analysis. All three AI models are provided with the identical question prompts and suggested points for incorporation, and marking criteria. They are then tasked with grading and providing feedback for a sample of ten anonymised student submissions.

The research assesses three key metrics: Grade Alignment, which measures the correlation and variance between AI-assigned grades and human marker grades across both assessment types; Feedback Quality, which examines the depth, constructive nature, and actionable relevance of the AI-generated feedback, particularly its ability to handle the nuance of legal reasoning; and Validity of Process, an analysis questioning whether AI can effectively replicate the critical evaluation function of human marking complex legal arguments.

Preliminary findings will explore the differential efficacy of AI across authentic and problem-style assessments and provide crucial insights into the reliability and pedagogical implications of deploying commercial AI tools for high-stakes academic grading in law. This research aims to inform institutional policy regarding academic integrity, marker workload, and the future role of AI in legal education.

Nathan Marshall, 'More than just chalk and talk: In defence of the lecture as a pedagogical tool in the age of AI'

The conference theme calls for a 'reimagining' of legal education to prepare students for a future dominated by technology. In an era where information transfer is free, instant, and increasingly automated by AI, the traditional lecture as a vehicle for 'content delivery' is effectively obsolete. As Bligh (2000) argued in his 'autopsy' of the format a quarter of a century ago, the 'chalk and talk' model is demonstrably ineffective at promoting deep thought or changing student attitudes.

However, this paper argues that the obsolescence of *information transfer* does not mean the obsolescence of the *lecture*. Instead, it necessitates a fundamental reframe: viewing the lecture not as a transaction of data, but as an exercise in 'relational capitalism'.

Drawing on a synthesis of behavioural economics (Thaler & Sunstein), cognitive psychology (Khaneman), and persuasion theory (Sutherland), this paper will demonstrate that the modern lecturer's primary role is to act as a 'choice architect'. The lecture must be reimagined as a performance designed to build a 'capital fund' of trust, rapport, and a psychological safety (Edmondson) – the uniquely human elements that AI cannot replicate.

This session will critique the 'transactional' model and provide a practical, evidence-based toolkit for this human-centred pedagogy, including:

- Honest admissions: applying Inoculation Theory to build credibility by authentically validating student anxiety regarding complex black-letter law;
- Architecting curiosity: using 'framing effects' to re-present passive syllabus topics as active puzzles, thereby nudging large cohorts towards intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan);
- Cognitive load management: deploying humour and narrative not as entertainment, but as cognitive tools to manage load and build the rapport required for deep learning (Garner, 2006).

The paper concludes that by investing in this relational capital, educators can 'spend' it to achieve superior pedagogical outcomes: demanding focus, motivating active preparation, and fostering resilience.

Althaf Marsoof, 'Thinking with ChatGPT: Critical Thinking in Human–AI Business Law Problem-Solving' (online)

Critical thinking is central to legal education and closely intertwined with legal reasoning. Yet, the increasing use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT raises new questions about how students actually reason when engaging with legal problem-solving. Existing research often evaluates AI-supported learning by focusing on final written products, but this approach overlooks the cognitive processes that unfold during human–AI interaction. As discussions in the literature increasingly suggest, examining only the end product risks mistaking fluent expression for genuine analytical engagement and obscuring how reasoning is distributed across the interaction.

This paper reports on an empirical study involving business law students solving a contract law problem on offer and acceptance with and without ChatGPT assistance. Drawing on detailed transcripts of student–AI interactions and rubric-based comparisons of Phase 1 (AI-assisted) and Phase 2 (without AI) answers, the study conceptualises critical thinking as a dynamic, multi-stage process. A four-stage framework – prompting, output interpretation, response and iteration, and synthesis – is used to analyse how critical thinking is exercised at each point of interaction. The findings show that ChatGPT's outputs were frequently incomplete, inaccurate, or subtly misleading despite their fluency, and that many students incorporated these weaknesses directly into their reasoning. However, others demonstrated higher levels of critical engagement by formulating more precise prompts, interrogating inconsistencies, and using the AI's responses as a springboard for deeper analysis in their final scripts.

The study shows that critical thinking in AI-supported legal problem-solving cannot be inferred solely from final written answers. By foregrounding the four-stage interactional process, the paper offers a framework for rethinking assessment and pedagogy in the age of generative AI.

Mark Tsagas, Reimagining the Great Books approach to Higher Education: The role of classic teaching techniques in Legal Pedagogy

Bertrand Russel once remarked that “*more important than the curriculum is the question of the methods of teaching and the spirit in which teaching is given*”. To this end, when one discusses the future of law, and by extension that of the legal profession, one cannot simply divorce it from debates regarding the reimagination of legal education. This paper purports to examine both in tandem through the lens of educational theory linked to practice. By swivelling one’s attention to history, an array of teaching techniques come to light which, if adapted properly, can cultivate the soft skills, cultural competencies and multiple intelligences that the profession demands from graduates. The Great Books approach is one such technique that addresses gaps in AI literacy and digital skills. Serving as a form of historic experiential learning it operates as ripe documentation of human interaction with law, as well as reactions to changes in the status quo. Alternate perspectives holistically cultivate empathy, criticality, active interest and a strong core of ethics necessary for safeguarding the independence of the legal profession and upholding its principles of justice and fairness. This paper seeks a middle ground, where it neither rejects the old nor holds innovation at arm’s length. Teaching is still a performative human-centred endeavour and thus part of the way forward is rooted in the writings of the past.

## **AI and Integrity 1**

Marnie Brown, 'Reimagining Legal Education with and for AIPEAL Students: Ethical AI Integration to Support EAL Learners in Australian Law Schools'

This paper presents findings from my ongoing doctoral research at Monash University, which investigates how generative Artificial Intelligence can be responsibly, ethically and inclusively embedded into the core law curriculum to enhance learning outcomes for Asian Indo Pacific English as an Additional Language (AIPEAL) students. As legal education adapts to algorithmic decision-making, digital lawyering and the changing expectations of the global profession, there remains a critical gap in understanding how these technological developments intersect with the needs, aspirations and identities of culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Drawing on a mixed-methods research design, including classroom-based AI interventions, interviews and focus groups with EAL law students, staff surveys, and analysis of assessment artefacts, the project examines:

1. How AIPEAL students currently use generative AI for legal reading, writing and research;
2. The extent to which AI-mediated feedback and structured prompt supports can scaffold disciplinary literacy and confidence; and
3. How assessment design, rubric construction and in-class pedagogy can be reimagined to integrate AI without compromising academic integrity, deep learning or human-centred lawyering.

Preliminary findings indicate that when positioned as a guided, transparent support tool rather than a replacement for human judgment, AI can meaningfully bridge linguistic and cognitive load gaps, help students decode complex legal texts, and democratise timely formative feedback in large cohorts. However, these benefits are not automatic: inequities emerge where policies lack clarity, students rely on unregulated tools, or staff feel underprepared to model responsible use.

The paper proposes a practical, evidence-informed framework for “human-centred, AI-enabled legal education,” emphasising ethical AI literacy, scaffolded assessment practices, culturally responsive pedagogy and collaborative student–staff co-design. This work contributes to growing international scholarship on EDI-oriented AI integration, widening participation in law, and preparing graduates for digitally mediated, cross-border legal work. As an early-career academic specialising in AI, legal education and EAL pedagogy, I aim to offer insights that can support the broader reimagining of legal education envisioned by ALT 2026.

Nesibe Kurt Konca, 'Reimagining Legal Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: From AI Literacy to Algorithmic Output Governance Competence' (online)

The increasing reliance of judicial institutions on artificial intelligence (AI) raises fundamental questions about public trust and the legitimacy of decision-making under the rule of law. As courts integrate digital tools into case management, drafting and decision-support processes, transparency, justification and the continued presence of human judgment become central to maintaining confidence in the justice system. From my experience, however, legal education has been slow to engage with these challenges. In many law schools, discussions of AI remain focused on technical familiarity with emerging tools, while the deeper professional, ethical and institutional implications receive comparatively little attention.

What emerges from sustained engagement with judicial digitalisation projects is that the core educational challenge posed by AI does not lie in learning how to use new technologies, but in maintaining independent and accountable judgment over their outputs. My involvement in initiatives related to Türkiye's National Judiciary Informatics System (UYAP) and broader e-justice reforms has repeatedly shown how easily legal professionals may come to rely on algorithmic suggestions. Efficiency gains and standardisation often create a tendency to treat AI-supported drafts as presumptively correct, limiting critical engagement with the assumptions and constraints embedded in these systems.

One particularly pressing problem observed in practice concerns the use of AI-generated draft judicial decisions and legal petitions containing fabricated legal references, commonly described as "hallucinations". Lawyers are increasingly required to navigate not only the risk of such errors entering judicial reasoning, but also client expectations that claims and defences should be grounded in AI-produced yet non-existent case law. These dynamics place legal professionals in a difficult position and, if left unaddressed, risk weakening public confidence in judicial decision-making.

Against this background, I use the term Algorithmic Output Governance Competence to describe a capacity that contemporary legal education must consciously seek to develop. This competence involves the ability to assess, contextualise and, where necessary, reject AI-generated outputs, and to justify such choices in a transparent and professionally responsible manner. Importantly, this capacity cannot be understood as static. As law, technology and society evolve together, legal education must prioritise continuous learning and reflective judgment to ensure that professional competence remains adaptive.

Seen from this perspective, the quality of legal education is closely connected to both public trust in the judiciary and the resilience of the rule of law. Lawyers who are trained to retain control over algorithmic tools, rather than defer to them, are better equipped to sustain judicial legitimacy and reasoned decision-making in an increasingly digital legal environment. The paper therefore suggests a human-centred and governance-aware approach to curriculum design as one meaningful response to the challenges posed by artificial intelligence in contemporary legal practice.

### **Panel 1: 'Meaningful Staff-Student Partnerships in the Law School'**

This panel, chaired by Rachael O'Connor (Leeds) and H  l  ne Tyrrell (Newcastle) examines staff-student partnerships as drivers of innovation, inclusion, and experiential learning in legal education. By focusing on non-traditional forms of partnership, the panel offers fresh insights into how innovative collaborations can re-energise legal education in a post-Covid context marked by reduced engagement and evolving student needs.

The panel membership is drawn from contributors to a book on staff-student partnerships, co-edited by the panel chairs: *How to Build Meaningful Staff/Student Partnerships in the Law School* (Edward Elgar, expected 2026/7). Panellists will deliver seven lightning talks (five minutes each), with the remaining time for questions and discussion. Given the focus on staff-student partnerships, it is proposed that, where possible, students will be involved in delivering lightning talks and as participants in the discussion.

Lightning talks will cover a number of themes, including types of staff-student partnerships; reflections on co-teaching; partnerships in a distance learning context; working in partnership towards decolonisation; co-creation of disciplinary glossaries; partnerships addressing challenges in assessment and feedback; and partnerships to address inequalities in relation to race and ethnicity in legal education.

Collectively, the panel showcases innovative partnership practices that often remain under the radar, offering practical and strategic insights for reimagining teaching, learning, and community across contemporary legal education.

## Partnerships & Belonging 1

Lucy Yeatman, 'Co-production – what happens if we ask students to help design assessments?'

This paper will report on a research project into student perceptions of assessment in a law clinic setting. In the spring of 2025, with the support of a small grant from the university, I recruited 4 student interns to assist me in running focus groups on student experiences of assessment. I will present some of the themes that been identified in the focus groups discussions.

The law clinic module at the University of Liverpool is designed on experiential principles, with students learning about law and practice by working on a number of client cases in small groups of six or seven. There is an emphasis on peer learning and peer feedback throughout. Our module students undertake and assessment that includes an advice letter to a client and two pieces of reflection at the end of the semester. With the recent and rapid growth of large language model artificial intelligence (LLM AI) software, a significant part of both the reflection and letter writing elements of the assessment could be written using freely available software. This has led us to consider reviewing of the assessment but before making any changes I wanted to find out more about the students' understanding of their learning and how they feel about assessment.

This project aimed to work with students as partners to:

- explore student understanding of skills and knowledge developed in the Law Clinic
- learn about student understanding of the role of LLM AI in law
- design assessment methods that can capture the rich and authentic learning that takes place in the Law Clinic
- to help refocus students away from the idea that assessment is something that is done to them, to a process through which they have some control over, designed to develop their own skills and knowledge

Working with students as partners and co-researchers, creates a flat structure without the power imbalance created by a group run by a lecturer. The students are more likely to feel able to speak freely, rather than saying what they think the lecturer wants to hear. Assessment and feedback are the drivers of learning, but for them to be meaningful and useful, students need to be able to engage in a dialogue with assessors and implement feedback to develop. Working alongside students to develop new and different ways of assessing their work will help us to understand assessment from their perspective. It will also encourage them to engage with assessment if they understand it has been designed and developed by their peers.

Adeniyi Olayode, 'Addressing the Wellbeing Question: The need to adopt a joint Staff and Student Wellbeing Strategy in UK Law Schools'

Recently, we have seen various attempts by universities and respective departments to respond to the rise in wellbeing challenges for both students and staff. This followed reports of a steady increase in the reporting of mental health challenges, across the University community. Students have raised concerns about the consistent pressures and challenges they undergo to achieve high grades whilst negotiating with high costs of education and no guarantees they will acquire a job after their degree (McCloud and Bann 2019; Richardson et al 2017). Academic Staff are also experiencing similar challenges as a result of increasing workload due to the ever increasing consumerisation of the university experience (Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019; Johnson, Willis, and Evans 2019).

However, despite the recognised impact across the university community, the response by most Universities to the issues of mental health has been to put forward divergent strategies for student and staff rather than adopt a universal approach (Brewster, Jones, Priestly, Wilbraham, Spanner and Hughes 2022). This paper will attempt to make a case for the adoption of the latter, arguing that challenges faced by both students and staff are intrinsically linked. As part of the proposal of a joint students/staff strategy, it will also be using a Law School as a test subject, highlighting specific examples of how these challenges manifest in daily activities. A key fundamental aspect to this strategy is the use of Restorative Justice as a medium to bridge conversations between students and staff to build the working relationship required to improve wellbeing issues for all members of the school (Preston, 2019).

**Literature:** Brewster, L., Jones, E., Priestly, M., Wilbraham, S.J., Spanner, L., and Hughes, G. (2022) 'Look after the staff and they would look after the students' cultures of wellbeing and mental health in the university setting' *Journal of Further and Higher Education* Vol 46, No. 4, 548–560; Preston, N., *Restorative Practices in Higher Education* (Resolution: Think Things Differently, 2019)

Michael Doherty, Lydia Bleasdale, Verona Ni Drisceoil, 'A tribe learning to survive' (and thrive):  
Connecting Legal Education and the value of communities of practice

There are a range of structures that can support legal education, from formal bodies such as learned societies (e.g. the ALT) with corporate personality, constitutions and subscribed members, to informal groupings of colleagues who work together on single time-limited projects. Somewhere along that spectrum lie Communities of Practice (CoP), 'groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly'.

*Connecting Legal Education* (CLE) is a mostly virtual, international network of legal educators and legal practitioners founded during Covid lockdown as a simple online space for 'hangouts' and presentations. It has developed into a free and open CoP with 400+ members that has hosted 75+ legal education and scholarship events, two in-person social gatherings, and an in-person conference: CLE-Fest 2024. Over the past six years, CLE has grown organically into a welcoming and informal CoP with community, belonging, and regular presence at its heart.

The CoP literature is extensive but seldom applied in the unique contexts of legal education or UK higher education. This paper steps into that gap and begins by considering how and why the CLE online community developed into a CoP. It maps CLE's structure and activities onto Etienne Wenger's three characteristics (domain, community and practice) and seven aspects of successful cultivation (e.g. design the community to evolve naturally, cultivate community spaces, find a regular rhythm) of CoPs. The paper argues that CoPs are open to anyone to develop within or outwith existing legal education structures, and that they offer distinctive value in advancing common competences, sharing tacit knowledge, and offering high-value learning. The paper concludes with reflections on how CoP models offer ideas for the future development of our and other communities in the legal education landscape

Charles Mak, 'Beyond Blame: Designing a Culture of Resilience and Learning from Error in Legal Education'

Anxiety and perfectionism among law students and legal professionals have become persistent concerns, with clear links to poor wellbeing and burnout. Empirical research in several jurisdictions suggests that law students report higher levels of stress, distress, and perfectionism than many of their peers in other disciplines, and that early career lawyers often continue to work in environments where error is equated with personal inadequacy rather than seen as part of learning and professional growth. A prevailing culture in which mistakes are treated as individual failings reinforces shame, discourages help seeking, and inhibits innovation in both education and practice.

This paper argues that legal education can and should be redesigned to move beyond blame and towards a culture of resilience and learning from error. Drawing on educational psychology and design thinking, it examines the human experience of making mistakes and analyses how blame oriented responses undermine both learning and wellbeing. It then introduces the concepts of psychological safety and just culture, and applies them to the law school context. The paper proposes a set of pedagogical strategies that include fostering psychological safety in classrooms, introducing low stakes iterative feedback, and explicitly promoting a growth mindset in which mistakes are regarded as integral to learning rather than as evidence of fixed ability. It also considers the use of a "Failure CV" as a candid and constructive tool to normalise setbacks and highlight the value of the lessons they provide.

The overall framework shifts the focus from individual coping to systemic reform. It suggests that law schools should redesign assessment, feedback, and classroom practices so that students are invited to learn through error in a structured and supported way. By adopting these interdisciplinary measures, legal education can help develop a generation of lawyers who are more resilient, self aware, and healthy, and who are better equipped to engage critically and creatively with the complex problems of legal practice.



## **AI and the Curriculum 1**

Sarah Zaghoul and David Morgan, 'Beyond Prompt Engineering: What Should Law Students Learn About AI?' (online)

Retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) artificial intelligence (AI) tools raise specific pedagogical considerations for legal education. This study examines the implementation of a grounded AI system in a financial markets and banking regulation law module to analyse how students engage with tools that retrieve and synthesise legal materials from a defined knowledge base rather than generate content from broader training data. As AI adoption increases in the legal profession and law students increasingly employ AI for academic work, questions arise about whether legal education should emphasise technical AI competency or focus on using AI as a vehicle for developing critical evaluation skills and professional judgment.

The pedagogical design positioned the AI tool as a resource requiring validation rather than an authoritative source. The study outlines the approach adopted in the module, which required students to evaluate outputs, identify limitations or gaps in authority, and recognise instances where retrieval and synthesis did not address doctrinal complexity or contextual requirements.

Preliminary observations suggest students were able to describe how the tool retrieved and synthesised information from source materials and to identify limitations in its legal reasoning. The research considers implementation issues for law schools, including technical infrastructure for configuring RAG systems and scalability, and discusses how RAG tools may be incorporated into legal education whilst balancing technical skills development with substantive legal knowledge and critical thinking.

Nicole Kornet, 'Rebalancing the Purposes of Legal Education: AI as a Diagnostic Lens.'

Discussions on artificial intelligence in legal education are often framed in terms of academic integrity, assessment practices, and the need for technical adaptation. While these concerns are legitimate, they risk obscuring a more fundamental question: what does AI reveal about how legal education prepares jurists for their role in society? It is acknowledged that AI constitutes a major disruption in legal education. The argument that will be advanced in the paper is that this disruption should be taken seriously not only in technical terms, but as a diagnostic lens that brings to light deeper imbalances in educational purpose and pedagogy.

Jurists occupy a distinctive societal role. They are not merely technical legal problem-solvers, but interpreters of law, mediators of conflict and, ultimately, guardians of the rule of law in conditions of uncertainty, pluralism and contestation. Fulfilling this role requires juristic agency: the capacity to exercise judgment, justify interpretations, engage with competing values and take responsibility for legal decisions that affect individuals and communities.

Drawing on Gert Biesta's tripartite model of educational purpose – qualification, socialisation and subjectification – the paper will examine how contemporary legal education has become heavily oriented toward qualification understood as the acquisition of doctrinal knowledge and analytical skills as reflected in individual task performance. Socialisation into the dialogic and normative practices of law often remains implicit, while subjectification - in the sense of the formation of students as responsible agents capable of judgment - receives limited intentional pedagogical support.

AI intensifies this imbalance. By generating plausible interpretations and legal texts, it destabilises conventional understandings of qualification and challenges curricula that equate competence with task performance. It also exposes the fragility of socialisation in legal education by revealing how often disciplinary norms remain implicit. With AI, students may reproduce the form of legal reasoning without understanding the standards of justification and responsibility that underpin it. More critically, AI threatens subjectification. By offering ready-made answers, it risks bypassing the interpretive struggle, uncertainty and deliberation through which legal judgment is formed, thereby threatening the development of juristic agency.

Rather than proposing technical solutions or regulatory controls, the paper will argue that AI calls for a rebalancing of educational purpose. It will contend that AI invites legal educators to reassert the interpretive, dialogic and socially embedded nature of law, and align pedagogy and assessment that create space for subjectification, understood in legal education as the emergence of juristic agency. By reframing AI as an invitation to educational reflection rather than a problem to be solved or a new skill to be learned, the paper aims to contribute a principled account of why and how legal education must evolve if jurists are to meet their societal responsibilities in an AI-mediated world.

Lisa Spirakes, 'Learning by Doing (and Sometimes Failing): Designing GenAI Activities for Law Students'

This paper examines the tension between preparing law students for a profession that increasingly expects AI literacy and concerns about irresponsible or uncritical use of generative AI by our students. In an attempt to address this tension, my colleague and I included AI-based activities in our two modules this year, with the aim of building confidence and prompting critical reflection on the use of AI tools. The activity in the first-year module encourages students to use genAI to produce a legal document which we then discuss in class. The second-year activity is more overtly about using AI and includes a task followed by a student-led discussion on the benefits/strengths of LLMs and the ethical, environmental, reputational and other risks when using these tools. Finally, I will reflect on the challenges posed when designing these activities and lessons learned so far.

Marcin Rau, 'Mindlessness as the Hidden Disease of Legal Education'

What if the main threat to legal education is not artificial intelligence, but how students are taught to learn? This paper explores mindlessness as a structural feature of legal studies, using Ellen Langer's theory as an analytical lens. The study is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected from 1375 law students across 10 universities in Poland and Germany. The results are striking. When asked how often they learn without reflection, more than 80% of respondents selected "sometimes", "often" or "very often". At the same time, a significant proportion (35% in Poland and 45% in Germany) explicitly frame their studies as a means to pass exams rather than to develop lasting understanding. Qualitative data reveal a shared experience of boredom, cognitive disengagement and instrumental learning, often linked to non-interactive lectures and limited space for discussion. Mindlessness, as Langer suggests, is not a personal failure but a predictable outcome of environments that reward compliance over curiosity. While particularly characteristic of continental European legal education, similar tendencies can be observed within common law systems facing increasing standardisation and assessment pressure. Importantly, the paper reframes the role of technology. Rather than undermining legal education, digital tools force a long-overdue question: what is the added value of the human teacher? In line with andragogical principles, effective legal education depends on lecturers who can structure interactive learning, foster dialogue and support reflective thinking. Technology may transform how knowledge is delivered, but it also clarifies what cannot be automated. Reimagining legal education for the future therefore requires confronting mindlessness directly and investing in teaching practices that activate learners rather than manage them.

## **Employability, Skills and the Future 2**

Gary Cazalet, 'Future Lawyer at Melbourne Law School'

Calls for reform in legal education often clash with the realities of overcrowded curricula. Yet, if law schools are to genuinely prepare students for a rapidly evolving legal profession, fundamental shifts in what we teach—and how—are essential. This presentation draws on the development and delivery of Future Lawyer, a subject at Melbourne Law School.

In an era where AI and legal tech are revolutionising legal practice worldwide, the role of human lawyers is evolving rather than diminishing. Future Lawyer is built on the recognition that today's graduates must be equipped not only with doctrinal knowledge and research skills, but also with the uniquely human skills of creativity, reflective practice, self-awareness, and the ability to navigate complexity and change. These are not "add-ons" to the curriculum but essential to a modern legal education.

In Future Lawyer, students engage deeply with literature and experiential activities that build skills in emotional intelligence, cultural safety, and professional identity formation. We consider topics such as sexual harassment in the legal sector, emotional intelligence, neurodiversity and trauma-informed lawyering. Importantly, students are not merely taught about these concepts—they practise them through peer engagement, collaborative work, and structured reflective exercises that develop confidence and skills in creativity and personal resilience.

In this presentation, I will reflect on the design strategies I have used to integrate new core competencies without overloading students or sacrificing academic rigour. I will share examples of how collapsing traditional boundaries between "skills" and "content," embedding reflection into assessment, and using experiential learning have fostered deep engagement and authentic learning. I will illustrate how students have responded with creativity, insight, and a clear sense of pride and commitment to their learning.

Drawing on student feedback and reflections, the paper argues that integrating these new core competencies is necessary for aligning legal education with the demands of contemporary practice and with the profession's obligation to serve a diverse society. Many students—fully aware of the pressures on the curriculum—have nonetheless called for this subject to be included as a core offering, highlighting its perceived value and impact. By fostering self-awareness, cultural humility, and creative problem-solving, Future Lawyer offers one model for how law schools might begin to reimagine the foundations of legal education in a way that is both principled and pragmatic.

Mitsu Parikh, 'The Pracademia of Predictive Justice' (online)

This paper proposes an innovative 'pracademia' model for legal education, fostering a symbiotic relationship between law schools and legal technology start-ups to cultivate 'next-gen' legal professionals. As the legal landscape is reshaped by algorithmic decision-making and digital tools, traditional curricula often lag in preparing graduates for these demands. This model advocates for embedding students directly within legal tech start-up environments, not merely as interns, but as active participants in the development and deployment of predictive analytics, automated legal services, or blockchain-based solutions.

The proposed integration seeks to bridge the pedagogy/practice gap by providing students with hands-on experience in innovation, technology development, and ethical considerations inherent in emerging legal tech. This immersive approach aims to develop critical entrepreneurial skills, data literacy, and a proactive mindset necessary to anticipate and address future legal needs. The paper will outline a framework for implementing such a program, discuss its pedagogical benefits in fostering human-centred lawyering and critical thinking, and analyze potential challenges, including resource allocation, curriculum accreditation, and intellectual property considerations.

Ultimately, this 'pracademia' model of "Predictive Justice" aims to create a dynamic learning ecosystem that equips graduates not only to adapt to technological shifts but also to actively shape the future of legal practice, ensuring justice remains accessible, equitable, and forward-looking in an increasingly digitized world.

Sally Anderson and Melissa Fletcher, 'Empowering Communities through Monash University Street Law and the Justice Bus'

Experiential learning provides a powerful framework for developing legal knowledge, professional skills, and civic responsibility through structured, real-world engagement. This presentation examines the Monash University Street Law program and the Justice Bus as student-led experiential learning initiatives that combine community legal education with authentic learning opportunities for law students.

Street Law at Monash was established to deliver accessible legal education to secondary school students, particularly in vulnerable and under-served communities, with a focus on areas such as human rights and criminal law. Delivered by law students to students, the program adopts interactive, participatory teaching methods that require student presenters to translate complex legal concepts into clear, engaging, and contextually relevant learning activities. The Justice Bus extended this experiential model by taking Street Law 'on the road', enabling students to deliver legal information sessions in regional schools with limited access to legal education and outreach services.

Drawing on the design and delivery of these programs, the presentation analyses how experiential learning is scaffolded through preparation, supervision, and reflective practice to support student learning while delivering meaningful community outcomes. It argues that these programs produce dual benefits: increasing legal literacy and empowerment among young people, while fostering students' communication skills, ethical awareness, and professional identity formation.

This presentation also briefly considers the challenges of sustainability and presenter preparedness and identifies opportunities to extend experiential outreach beyond traditional school settings. It concludes that student-led community legal education is an effective experiential learning model that advances access to justice and inclusive legal education.

Augustina Akoto and Olubunmi Onafuwa, 'Can curriculum transformation, decolonisation and employability co-exist in a Career's First University?'

Universities face demands from both students and government to prepare graduates for employment. Teaching in a 'Careers First' university, where the curriculum and pedagogy have been overhauled to reflect this, there is a greater focus on employability. However, at the same time, the Degree Awarding Gap has also been an issue of concern. One of a number of strategies to address this, has been to decolonise the curriculum. This is of particular relevance where the student body is one of the most ethnically diverse in the country. The learning and teaching strategy places great emphasis on inclusive learning and curricula, fortified by the work of the Office of Institutional Equity. An opportunity to revalidate the LLB Law degree lead to a reconsideration of its structure and assessment, but also a consideration of how to decolonise it. As an initial step, a new optional module, Law and Society in Africa will be introduced. The genesis of this module stems from the fact that the majority of students are from a BAME background, with a significant number of Black African heritage students. Aligned to this was the existing research interests and expertise in the department which permitted the introduction of such a module.

The presentation will explore whether there will be a conflict or tension between these seemingly competing ideals, between employability; decolonising the curriculum and decreasing the Degree Awarding Gap.

## **Panel 2: ‘Reimagining legal education for the future of law: Advancing reflective practice as a core professional competency in the UK’**

Our presenters will explore different aspects and perspectives of how reflective practice has been evolving for law students and legal professionals in the UK. This session is the first event offered as part of the *2026 International Symposium Series: Reflective Practice for Legal Professionals*. Following the presentations, participants are invited to share their working knowledge and observations of how well reflective practice has been accepted and implemented in the UK. Does the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning literature adequately capture promising developments? How else is reflective practice being more visibly and viably advanced? How can current and evolving developments in the UK, and the *Symposium Series* and its legacy website contribute to advancing reflective practice as a professional metacompetency? What else might help?

**Panel Moderator & Discussion Facilitator: Nigel Duncan, Prof. Emeritus of Legal Education, City Law School, City St George’s, University of London, UK (moderating and facilitating discussion in person)**

Bio: Although retired, Nigel continues to teach Advocacy on the Bar course. He researches and writes in areas of professional ethics and student and practitioner wellbeing. He serves on the editorial boards of *The Law Teacher* and *The European Journal of Legal Education*. He is currently editing the ninth edition of *Opinion Writing and Case Preparation* for Oxford University Press and is co-editing a special issue of *The Law Teacher*. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of Law Teachers.

**Presenter: Dr. Michele Leering (presenting remotely)**

Abstract: *Exploring Reflective Practice in the Law Schools in England & Wales: Does the Literature Adequately Capture Promising Developments?*

Michele will present a preliminary thematic analysis of scholarly journal and grey literature about reflective practice in law and how it has evolved as a legal professional competency in England & Wales. This presentation will also explore a sampling of literature that advances critique and critical theory for the contributions these articles make to building student capacity for critical reflection, one of the five articulated domains of *integrative reflective practice* for legal professionals. Time permitting, comparative insights from country-specific Australian, Canadian, and US literature reviews will also be shared.

Bio: Michele is a Visiting Scholar at Queen’s University Faculty of Law in Ontario, Canada. She is co-organizing the *2026 International Symposium Series: Reflective Practice for Legal Professionals* with Queen’s Law Prof. Sharry Aiken. Michele’s 2023 doctoral [dissertation](#) explored how and why reflective practice has been implemented in Canadian and Australian law schools. She was a lawyer and long-time ED of a non-profit community-based legal clinic in Ontario serving people living in poverty. Her passion for encouraging reflective practice arose from her struggles as a young lawyer, as a supervisor of lawyers and law students, and efforts to build Ontario’s system of 70+ clinics as learning organizations – hubs of holistic and innovative legal services. She advocates for more robust legal professional competency frameworks to align with the OECD and other international bodies’ vision for people-centred justice (PCJ) in response to the UN 2030 Agenda’s Sustainable Development Goal 16.3 on equal access to justice and the rule of law. She presents internationally on her work, including as a 2024 ALT conference keynote. Her publications include [how reflective practice might be introduced in law school](#), how it better [supports access to justice](#), and the [perils and pitfalls to avoid when introducing it](#).

**Presenter: Roddy Cairns (presenting in person)**

**Abstract: *Reflective Practice as Preparation for a Career as a Scottish Solicitor***

Reflective practice has been embedded into the profession in Scotland through the mandatory reflective elements which have formed part of the Law Society of Scotland's compulsory Professional Education and Training Programme (PEAT). There are two stages to PEAT; PEAT 1 is the Diploma in Professional Legal Practice (a 1-year postgraduate course undertaken after the completion of an undergraduate LLB), whilst PEAT 2 is the ongoing learning element of the Scottish traineeship. Roddy will reflect on his own experience of reflective practice during his Diploma and traineeship, and how the University of Strathclyde is encouraging reflective practice at an early stage to prepare students for that.

Bio: Roddy is a Teaching Fellow at the University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, Scotland), specialising in Scots Private Law and Experiential Learning. Prior to entering academia, he was a litigation solicitor in a busy Scottish commercial law firm (qualified to practice in Scotland, Ireland and England & Wales). His primary academic interests are in the Scots Law of Obligations, International Sports Law, and alternative assessment regimes.

**Presenter: Chloe Sheppick (presenting in person)**

**Abstract: *The Ever-Growing Importance of Reflective Practice for Lawyers and How This Can Be Taught at Law School***

Having published on our efforts to incorporate reflective practice into the MSc in Law and Professional Practice at KCL ([Unveiling the benefits of reflective learning in professional legal practice](#)), this presentation will show how the implementation of reflective practice into the assessment of the dissertation on the MSc has developed and will also assess the efficacy of other incorporations of reflection (such as within a Careers Skills portfolio that we have developed). Additional suggestions will also be presented to further incorporate reflection within our course (which is taught using a bespoke-problem based learning pedagogy), including assessment by way of a reflective portfolio for a 45-credit module, as will developments in the UK with regard to CPD that have elicited a clear responsibility for UK lawyers to reflect on their practice and, therefore, I would argue, a responsibility on law schools to teach this essential skill.

Bio: Chloe is a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Director of the Professional Law Institute at the King's College London (Professional Law Institute – part of the Dickson Poon School of Law). She is passionate about reflective practice and has published about and is in charge of incorporating reflective practice into the MSc course detailed above. In addition to this, she is a qualified solicitor of England and Wales and has an unique understanding of the clear intersection between the teaching and practice of law. She champions the benefits from both practitioner and academic angles. In 2025, she wrote and taught a module on reflective practice for the International Bar Association's International Legal Practice executive education course. It received the highest feedback score of all KCL modules and showed a real demand from lawyers globally for this type of training.

**Presenter: Dr. Philip Drake (presenting in person)**

**Abstract: *Building Critical Interpretation and Reflection through LEGO®***

Critical realism provides an ontological and epistemological conceptual foundation to view the world and how we gain knowledge (Bhaskar,1978). Such an approach provides a potential route to circumnavigate the traditional positivist (objective)/constructivist (subjective) dichotomy (Twining,

2018) by acknowledging that both agency and social structures can be viewed together. Whilst this theoretical base has commonly been used for methodological underpinnings in research, this paper will propose that it may equally be used as a method of critical interpretation, reflection and practice. One technique that can be specifically utilised to support and enhance such a process of critical reflection is through the construction of LEGO® models, which represent metaphoric stories of experiences, perceived identities and influences. This is both a cerebral and experiential process where individuals reflect through their fingers by constructing metaphorical models external to themselves (Papert & Harel, 1991). The use of LEGO®SERIOUS PLAY® has already been identified as a viable pedagogical technique to assist with complex legal problem solving (Ribary & Allen, 2024). This presentation will build upon such ideas to consider the findings of an empirical study involving law clinic students, using the construction of tangible LEGO® models as a means to both solidify abstract ideas and uncover emergent cognitive, social and emotional reflections.

Bio: Dr Philip Drake is a multiple award-winning Senior Lecturer in Law, Director of the Justice Hub, ITL Fellow for Partner Enabled Learning and former Director of Social Responsibility for the School of Social Sciences at The University of Manchester. Before joining Manchester in 2019, he was responsible for establishing the innovative award-winning Legal Advice Clinic, based off campus in shop premises, for the University of Huddersfield in 2013. He has worked as a consultant for the University of Birmingham's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in their Virtuous Professionals Interventions Project (between 2014 and 2017); been a steering group member for a Legal Education Foundation £100,000+ funded project (between 2019 and 2021) – 'The Law for Dementia Carers' and jointly led a working party to incorporate social responsibility teaching into the new law degree at Manchester (2021-2022). He has worked internationally with both the University Complutense Madrid (2022-2024) and University of Southern Denmark (2019) to support clinical legal education and setting up a Legal Advice Clinic.

**Presenter: Dr. Jenny Gibbons (presenting remotely)**

**Abstract: *Reflective Practice Assessment as an Example of Realignment and Refraction***

Reflective practice is of fundamental importance in the clinical legal education context, and it is becoming increasingly common for this to be captured as part of assessment. Recording this personal perspective in an authentic way faces challenges when it is evaluated against University standard learning outcomes and marking criteria. I conducted a study of the staff perspective of this in 2017 which led to an article in the *Teaching in Higher Education* journal setting out evidence of behaviours I categorised as both realignment and refraction. I will now capture the student perspective, most notably in relation to the impact of GenAI on assessment in recent years.

Bio: Jenny qualified as a solicitor in the UK in 2003. Since 2004 she has been working in legal education with extensive experience at undergraduate, postgraduate and professional levels. She has an LLM in Human Rights and a PhD in Educational Research: the focus of her doctoral research was a comparative study of legal education in England and Canada. She worked at Kaplan in 2024 and is familiar with the challenges associated with entry level qualifications into the legal sector. She is now Clinical Legal Education Supervisor at the University of Manchester where free legal advice to members of the public is provided as part of a pioneering service-learning project.

## **AI and (or not) in assessment**

Annabelle Harrison, 'Authentic Assessment in the Age of AI: Simulated Client Meetings in Land Law'

The growing availability of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools has prompted renewed questions about the value and authenticity of traditional written assessment in legal education. In particular, there is increasing concern that written coursework may assess students' ability to use automated tools rather than their understanding of legal principles or their capacity to apply the law in practice. This paper reflects on an assessment redesign within an undergraduate Level 6 Land Law and Landlord and Tenant Law module taught to non-law students studying Property Development, developed in response to these concerns.

The redesigned assessment replaced a 50% written land law report with a simulated client meeting. Students were provided with a hypothetical scenario relevant to property development which raised land law issues. They were required to prepare a short written client briefing note, supported by an annotated appendix identifying the legal sources they had used to prepare their advice, before providing verbal advice to a client in a simulated professional meeting. The client role was played by the module coordinator, allowing for questioning, clarification and the need for students to respond in real time to client concerns.

Placing the assessment in a realistic professional context was intended to encourage students to engage more deeply with the underlying legal concepts and to demonstrate skills that are difficult to replicate through generative AI, such as legal judgment, professional communication and ethical awareness. Seminar activities were redesigned to support the assessment, giving students regular opportunities to practise advising on land law issues and helping to strengthen the connection between teaching, learning and assessment.

The paper offers a reflective account of the rationale for this approach and considers its relevance to wider debates about assessment design and the responsible integration of AI in legal education. It suggests that simulated client meetings offer a practical and adaptable form of authentic assessment, particularly in interdisciplinary and vocational settings, and highlights opportunities for further evaluation and collaboration in this area.

Olga Piaskowska and Piotr Piezewicz, 'Rethinking Legal Skills Assessment Tasks under Conditions of Widespread AI Use'

The widespread availability of generative artificial intelligence tools significantly undermines the validity and reliability of traditional forms of assessment in legal education, particularly those based solely on the evaluation of the final output of a student's work, such as an essay or a case study. In legal education, this challenge is especially acute in the first year of study, which constitutes a crucial stage in the development of core legal skills, attitudes related to academic integrity, and awareness of the future professional role of a lawyer.

This paper presents a proposed methodology for designing legal skills exercises under conditions of universal access to artificial intelligence tools. The approach assumes that assessment tasks should be constructed in such a way that their completion cannot be reduced to the straightforward use of AI. Resistance to AI is not understood as a prohibition on the use of technology, but rather as a feature of a well designed task, resulting from its educational purpose, form, and adopted assessment criteria. The starting point is the assumption that an appropriate response of legal education to the challenges posed by AI does not lie in intensified control or in the detection of misconduct, but in the conscious redesign of the way tasks are formulated and student work is assessed.

The proposed methodology focuses on the assessment of the student's work process as revealed in the submitted assignment, rather than exclusively on the correctness of its final outcome. Particular emphasis is placed on legal reasoning, the sequence of decisions taken, the ability to justify those decisions, and reflection on one's own learning process. An important element of the proposed approach is also attention to the role of the teaching process itself, within which students acquire knowledge and skills. It is precisely the organisation of classes, in class work, and the gradual development of legal skills that constitutes the first and most important barrier limiting the possibility of mechanical use of generative artificial intelligence tools.

Marloes Spreeuw and Cristina Corralini, 'Assessing Law Students in a Changing Legal Education Landscape: Introducing Oral Assessments Across the Curriculum'

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has prompted law schools to critically re-evaluate traditional assessment practices, particularly coursework submitted online and other assessments such as multiple-choice questions completed at home. Concerns relating to academic integrity, authenticity, and the meaningful evaluation of student learning have accelerated a shift towards alternative assessment strategies, including greater use of in-person assessment, diversified assessment portfolios, and renewed interest in oral assessment. This paper examines the introduction of oral assessments within a newly revised assessment strategy, positioning them as both a response to AI-related challenges and a pedagogically valuable mode of assessment.

Using a case-study approach, the paper explores the implementation of different forms of oral assessment across undergraduate law modules at Levels 4, 5, and 6, including a core substantive module, a core skills module, and an optional Level 6 module with a large cohort. A range of oral assessment formats were introduced, including client-facing presentations, client-interview simulations, problem-based oral advice, and negotiation-focused dialogues, designed to align with learning outcomes and reflect authentic legal practice.

The paper analyses how the introduction of oral assessments reshaped learning and teaching experiences in the classroom. It demonstrates that oral assessments encouraged deeper engagement and understanding, enhanced students' ability to articulate legal reasoning in real time, and promoted active learning. Oral assessment also supported student attendance, fostered a sense of belonging, and contributed to a more interactive and enjoyable classroom environment. The findings further highlight positive impacts on skills development, particularly communication, critical thinking, professional identity formation, and resilience.

The paper also reflects critically on challenges encountered during implementation, including student anxiety, scalability, staff workload, and concerns around consistency and bias. Drawing on existing scholarship, it argues that many of these challenges can be mitigated through careful design, clear assessment criteria, staff training, and a coherent, programme-level approach to assessment. (Fenton, 2025; Kerin, 2025).

Overall, the paper concludes that oral assessments, when thoughtfully embedded across the curriculum as part of a holistic assessment strategy, offer a robust, authentic, and future-focused response to the challenges posed by AI in legal education, supporting deeper learning and the development of confident, resilient, and practice-ready law graduates.

Zubair Abbasi, 'GenAI Augmented Learning: Rethinking Legal Education Through Practice-Based Assessment'

This paper examines the integration of generative AI (GenAI) into legal education through assessment design that mirrors legal practice. It highlights the pedagogical value of GenAI-integrated assessments, where students use GenAI tools to perform practical tasks such as drafting, reviewing, and vetting legal documents including legal opinions, contracts, skeleton arguments, and other legal materials. In doing so, students critically engage with GenAI to develop an understanding of its capabilities, limitations, and the importance of human oversight.

The study adopts a critical reflective methodology, drawing on the author's teaching experience across undergraduate modules in contract, company, business, and commercial law. The research is grounded in a socio-constructivist and professional education framework, informed by critical legal pedagogy and experiential learning theory. Learning is conceptualised as a socially embedded process, where students construct legal knowledge by operating within their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky). GenAI serves as a cognitive scaffold, enabling learners to complete tasks that would otherwise be beyond their independent capacity, and supporting the development of higher-order reasoning through guided use. This approach also reflects Kolb's experiential learning cycle: students engage in authentic legal experiences (e.g., drafting), reflect on their use of GenAI, integrate insights with doctrinal and ethical frameworks, and reapply their learning in subsequent tasks. It aligns with recent developments in AI-supported education that advocate for human-centred AI literacy and collaborative cognition models. In the legal domain, GenAI-augmented learning encourages students to test, question, and refine their legal reasoning against AI-generated outputs to develop not only doctrinal knowledge but also critical thinking. The paper argues that when GenAI is integrated through guided, transparent, and practice oriented assessment design, it can meaningfully augment legal education by enhancing professional competence, deepening engagement, and enabling practice-based learning.

## **Partnerships and Belonging**

Louise Hewitt and Lucy Yeatman, 'Peer learning, from law clinics to the classroom: How this human-centred approach can support legal education'.

This paper will report on research carried out by us on how students understand the benefits and drawbacks of peer-learning. We trained student researchers to run focus groups with law clinic students from 8 different university law clinics and we have analysed the transcripts using reflexive thematic analysis.

The ability to work together, work in teams, work in groups and/or work collaboratively are common aims on law courses and law degrees and the ability to work with others is a key employability skill asked for by most graduate employers. Yet evidence suggests that law students find it particularly hard to work collaboratively, and anecdotally most of us have tales of student resistance to group work in our law programmes.

Our experience as law clinic lecturers is that students tend to be more willing to collaborate in a law clinic setting, than in large core modules. In this paper we will explore the key theme from our research, which is that trust and communication have to be the building blocks of student collaboration. But how can we find time and build personal relationships when we are teaching cohorts of several hundred students? We don't suggest that there is an easy solution or a quick fix to this, but it is our view that if we want to pay more than lip service to developing law graduates who value the support and contribution that their peers can make, we need to find space and time to build trust and communication into our curriculum in a meaningful way. By reflecting on our experiences in a law clinic setting we aim to offer some insight into ways of building trust and connection across the curriculum.

### Emma Roberts, 'The Personas Project'

Legal education faces an urgent need to evolve beyond traditional, doctrine-centred models toward approaches that recognise the diversity, complexity and humanity of our students. This paper presents the Personas Project, a strategic curriculum initiative that uses institutional data, student voice and empathy-mapping to co-create a set of principles for compassionate pedagogy in legal education. Rooted in design thinking and inclusive education, the project develops composite student personas that capture the varied lived experiences, aspirations and challenges of contemporary law students. These personas act as catalysts for reflective dialogue among staff, guiding curriculum redesign, assessment reform and teaching practice.

The project exemplifies interdisciplinary, human-centred innovation in legal education, one that operationalises equality, diversity and inclusion while addressing student wellbeing and belonging. By engaging staff and students as co-creators, it builds a culture of shared responsibility for inclusion and care, ensuring legal education remains responsive to societal change and professional demands. The paper concludes by articulating the co-created principles of compassionate pedagogy for Law and offering a replicable framework for embedding empathy into curriculum design and delivery.

Jo Wilson, 'Creating Space to Learn: Reflective Workshops as an Inclusive Pedagogical Tool in Legal Education'

This paper examines how embedding reflective workshops within the first-year Contract Law curriculum can advance inclusive teaching goals, while supporting students' transition into Higher Education. First-year students often face challenges linked to confidence, belonging, and effective study practices - factors that can disproportionately affect students from under-represented or non-traditional backgrounds. In response, on my Level 4 Contract Law module, I introduced structured one-hour reflective workshops at the end of each topic to create purposeful pauses in the curriculum, enabling students to consolidate knowledge and seek clarification in a low-stakes, supportive environment.

These workshops foreground self-reflection, encouraging students to consider their learning processes and identify areas for improvement. The use of interactive MCQs through Poll Everywhere promotes inclusion by allowing anonymous participation, reducing anxiety associated with speaking in large teaching spaces, and catering to varied learning preferences.

The paper draws on data collected from participating students, which presents an overwhelmingly positive picture of the workshops' impact. Students report that the sessions helped them pause and reflect meaningfully on each topic, check and reinforce their understanding, and better prepare for the summative multiple-choice assessment. Many also described feeling more supported in their transition to university-level study, highlighting increased confidence and a clearer sense of expectations.

The findings demonstrate that reflective workshops offer a scalable and transferrable model for embedding EDI principles into foundational law modules. By integrating structured reflection, interactive technology, and intentional pacing, this approach fosters more equitable participation and enhances the learning experience for all students, particularly during the critical first-year transition.



Karen Watton and Emma Rehal-Wilde, 'Who knows best for the future of law'?

Who knows best for the future of law? Is it law teachers, students, legal practitioners, clients, people who would like to be clients if only they could access legal services, experts from other fields, even genAI..? Perhaps, all the above.

For the last six years, qLegal, Queen Mary University of London's pro bono commercial law clinic, has been running Design Thinking-based legal innovation projects for real clients. Mixed teams of students across academic disciplines learn to listen to 'end users' of legal services to develop and test prototype solutions aimed at rethinking legal practice. Outputs have ranged from a child-friendly privacy notice to a resource bridging the cultural gap between lawyers and clients.

Partnering with Emma Rehal-Wilde of Baker McKenzie's pro bono team for the last two years, qLegal's end users have included Baker McKenzie lawyers and their pro bono clients. The students – next-gen lawyers - learn a new human-centred approach to legal problem-solving, develop a broader sense of what it means to be a lawyer and are better equipped to adapt for the future of law. What's more, the teaching method itself was co-designed with students using a Design Thinking human-centred approach.

In this presentation, Karen Watton draws on theory and practice to make the argument for running practical interdisciplinary projects to challenge understandings of legal education and legal practice. Karen and Emma draw on their collaboration to share insights and tips on improving legal service delivery, benefitting multiple stakeholders, and helping to change the mindsets of future lawyers.

This pulls together many themes relating to the future of legal education/the future of law:

- Experiential learning/clinical legal education
- Student employability/development of relevant skills and attributes to complement AI
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Universities partnering with external providers, and as part of a broader civic role
- Student Knowledge Exchange
- Design Thinking; and co-creation
- The role of tech in legal education and legal services
- Professional identity of next-gen lawyers
- Pro bono and supporting the rule of law

## **AI and the Curriculum 2**

Sharon Sinclair-Graham, 'Navigating the AI Divide: Building Resilient Skills and Ethical Awareness in Undergraduate Law'

Recent education debate around AI has seen a distinct bifurcation, with perhaps the biggest strand expressing concern not only about academic misconduct, but also the extent to which Generative AI is de-skilling our students. At the same time, an increasingly diverse student population means more creative thinking needs to go into helping students develop both traditional academic and 'softer' skills, and helping students recognise and showcase the experiential learning that occurs even in workplaces in retail and hospitality that seemingly have little in common with their chosen future career paths.

This paper is rooted in a comprehensive survey of how skills are bestowed across the Reading undergraduate law curriculum, and explores a range of approaches taken to identifying, teaching and assessing skills, including designing assessments that are as ChatGPT proof as possible or highlight to students the pitfalls of using GenAI, using role play and mock case files to build both law related and transferrable skills as naturally as possible, reflective writing linked to employability, a future-facing assessment portfolio and a first year module focused on ethical use of AI.

Ksenia Lavrenteva, 'What AI Cannot Know: Recentring Embodied Legal Knowledge in an Age of Algorithmic Text Generation'

Large language models now perform many tasks that legal education has traditionally assessed: summarising cases, generating arguments and producing written analysis. These developments risk further entrenching a conception of law as textual, abstract and detachable from the embodied, situated judgement that defines legal practice. This paper offers a conceptual and evidence-informed reframing of legal education that centres embodied legal knowledge as essential to the future of law.

Drawing on epistemological distinctions between propositional knowledge (know-that), procedural knowledge (know-how) and embodied knowledge (tacit, situated capacities), the paper argues that legal education has long privileged the forms of knowledge that AI now automates, such as doctrinal analysis, textual reasoning and information synthesis, while marginalising what makes legal judgement irreducibly human. A critical reading of recent literature on AI in legal education suggests that the most pedagogically effective uses of AI are those that foreground, rather than displace, embodied dimensions of legal practice.

The paper develops a three-principle framework for designing legal learning experiences that center embodiment: (1) foregrounding situated judgment over information retrieval; (2) cultivating tacit knowledge through reflection-in-action; and (3) recognising ethical knowing as relational and embodied. Each principle is illustrated through pedagogical examples demonstrating how AI can be deployed not as a substitute for human judgment but as a tool that creates space for developing capacities AI cannot replicate, reading context and power, developing tacit ethical sensibility, enacting judgment in relationships.

Rather than treating AI integration as a matter of "responsible use," this paper argues for fundamental epistemological reorientation: from legal knowledge as information to be transmitted, toward legal knowledge as embodied capacity to be cultivated. The framework offers legal educators both theoretical grounding and practical guidance for ensuring that legal education remains education for legal practice, not training in tasks algorithms can potentially perform better.

Ilias Kapsis and Despoina Farmaki, 'Generative AI and Doctoral Research in Law: Issues and Best Practices for Supervisors' (online)

Generative AI (GenAI) tools are increasingly used by PhD students. Recent surveys of academic researchers (e.g., OUP 2024; Wiley 2025) report widespread researcher experimentation with and growing adoption of GenAI alongside persistent concerns about the tool's reliability, bias, confidentiality, and the potential effects on critical thinking. These surveys report participant expectations that GenAI use in research will continue rising. Legal research is not immune to these trends: Law schools have been exploring potential responses aimed at safeguarding research integrity and doctoral quality standards, while encouraging PhD researchers to use GenAI ethically and responsibly.

The concerns often raised for GenAI use in taught programmes such as integrity risks, risks from hallucinations, GenAI over-reliance, and potential adverse impact on course engagement and skill development, may also arise in doctoral research, but due to the different structure and requirements of doctoral degrees, they exhibit distinct characteristics and, therefore, have to be addressed differently.

In taught programmes GenAI serves as a learning and assessment support tool, while in a doctoral research project its role varies. Doctoral research in law is a multi-year, multi-stage project characterised by sustained independent legal inquiry, iterative testing of data and hypotheses, and repeated cycles of thesis drafting, revising and editing. Supervisors play a central role in supporting the researcher and ensuring the maintenance of research integrity and standards of quality. For the thesis, doctoral regulations require originality, authorship, methodological transparency, and contribution to knowledge.

The use of GenAI can be addressed in supervisory meetings with the PhD students, while Research Ethics Committees may be involved to approve research methodologies based on the tool. However, one of the emerging challenges for supervisors and examiners is that GenAI use throughout the project's lifecycle is multifaceted and may vary substantially in form and significance depending on the research task and stage. The overall GenAI impact on research quality and its implications for thesis's authenticity, research independence, authorship, and data integrity, may be difficult to measure and assess. Another current challenge emerges from the difficulty the universities and supervisors face in identifying practical responses as GenAI's research capabilities evolve rapidly and the tool can generate PhD-level outputs.

Our paper discusses the issues emerging from the use of GenAI in doctoral legal research and presents a framework to support effective long-term responses from law schools and PhD supervisors. The framework aims to strike an acceptable balance between using GenAI to improve research outcomes, and safeguarding research integrity and quality in doctorate degrees. To strike that balance revisions in the current institutional and supervisory approaches to doctorate degrees in law will be required. These are also outlined in the paper.

## **Legal Education and Legal Practice 1**

Sue Prince, "Where we're going, we don't need roads": Is there a future path for public understanding of civil justice'

In England and Wales, senior policymakers increasingly promote AI and digital technologies as a necessary and positive development for the justice system. The Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Vos, has argued that an "efficient, economic and expeditious Digital Justice System" will enable the resolution of legal disputes online, a vision closely aligned with the expansion of online dispute resolution (ODR) in response to mounting pressures on the courts. Reform is presented as urgent: the Justice Select Committee has recently characterised the court system as "dysfunctional", citing chronic delays and the difficulty many court users face in understanding and navigating legal processes.

This paper examines the implications of digital justice reform for public legal education (PLE) at a time of acute crisis in access to justice. It asks whether a digitally driven justice system can do more than streamline dispute resolution, and instead support legal capability, procedural understanding, and meaningful participation, particularly for vulnerable and unrepresented litigants. Drawing on Tom Tyler's work on procedural justice, the paper argues that how individuals experience legal processes, including the extent to which they understand and feel respected by them, is central to perceptions of legitimacy and fairness.

Through a critical analysis of recent policy developments, the paper assesses whether digital and AI-enabled services can enhance or undermine PLE. It further explores the implications of increasing reliance on privately provided digital justice platforms for the rule of law, including concerns relating to accountability, transparency, and the erosion of the public, educative function of courts. In doing so, the paper considers what the future trajectory of civil dispute resolution means for public understanding of law and legal institutions.

Jeanette Ashton and Verona Ni Drisceoil, 'Building an Enabling Environment for Community, Human Flourishing and Agency in an AI World: The Professional Skills: Law in Action module, one year in'

Framed within the literature on relationality, authenticity, experiential learning and community and belonging, this paper explores the drivers, design, delivery and experience of a new Level 5 Professional Skills: Law in Action module at the University of Sussex. With skills development, human flourishing and widening participation as the drivers, this module incorporates several innovative design features including students setting up their own 'law firms' complete with mission statement; embedded oracy and presentation skills; information literacy for the workplace; responding to generative AI critically and effectively; weekly independent reflection through workshop 'exit tickets' and career management. Particularly unique to the module is a block of embedded consultancy work whereby students, in their 'law firms', work on live briefs to conduct legal research for local community organisations. The module culminates in a live in person assessment framed as a 'work in progress' interview, whereby the 'trainee lawyers' explain their process for a piece of authentic legal drafting and showcase their suitability for a fictional legal role.

Informed by a mixed methods empirical study that reviewed the inaugural year of the module, the paper will share perspectives from the 'trainee lawyers', the collaborative partners in the wider university, and the community organisations themselves. All point to the value in 'building an enabling environment' to help students connect with each other, us, as teachers, and with the community outside of the university. The research also points to the powerful impact of experiential learning and meaningful insights into the realities of professional life. Finally, we also share a bit about our absolute joy in designing and delivering this module – and the importance of finding space for creativity and meaningful connection.

Kate Ritchie and Deborah Wood, 'Human-Centred Legal Education in Practice: Lessons from an Online Business Law Clinic'

This paper will consider the role of business law clinics in addressing the access to justice gap applicable to businesses (Legal Services Board, 2022), and the opportunities and challenges that such clinics present (Askin et al, 2018). Against that background, the paper will discuss the experience of establishing and running an online business law clinic within the Open University's Law School. It will consider the rationale for the clinic's set up and the use of simulated client cases, noting that these simulated cases, whilst providing certain benefits, left students feeling a sense of dissatisfaction that they were not 'making a difference'. It will go on to explore how the clinic evolved to meet these concerns and to provide opportunities for students to form more direct relationships with real life business entrepreneurs, promoting greater empathy and understanding of business acumen and legal need. It will also explore how these developments afforded scope for the advancement of legal design skills, encouraging students to broaden their understanding and confidence in harnessing digital tools to take a more innovative and human-centred approach to the communication of complex legal concepts (Jones, McFaul and Ryan( 2017); Hews, Beligatamulla and McNamara (2023)). It will be of interest to anyone involved in clinical legal education or, more generally, in the future of human-centred legal education and the value of technology-assisted design skills within that context.

Rachael Campbell and Eleonore Hickman, 'Stimulating Learning Through Legal Practice'

The teaching of corporate law benefits from the ability to draw on a rich body of literature including law, economics and business. However, with increasing numbers of law students seeking transaction-based careers under ever more demanding circumstances, it is important to students and employers that theory maps onto practice. In this paper we discuss our course, designed in collaboration with practicing lawyers, to embed theory within the realities of practice. The course provides students with the opportunity to simulate the role of a lawyer in the sale and purchase of a company and bases teaching around complex and realistic professional transactions, combining simulation exercises, lectures and practitioner enhanced workshops.

Simulation courses are still a relatively new entrant to academic learning and teaching in the UK, despite calls for them in the corporate context going back almost 10 years. As one of the first to be implemented in the UK in 2016 and having now had the opportunity to evolve in response to student need, we now consider the pedagogic benefits and drawbacks of simulation learning. Using our experience of the course, and focus group data from students, this paper details the course design and theoretical underpinnings, assesses one of the simulated exercises (on due diligence) and examines the role of student reflection.

There are those who remain unconvinced that the teaching of 'soft' skills can be effectively aligned with the delivery of traditional substantive content. Through our experiences and empirical research with student participants, we provide evidence that not only can simulation teaching teach both soft skills and substantive content, but that it is uniquely effective in developing employability of students in a challenging graduate market. We argue that this atypical style of learning has an important place in a law students education portfolio.

### **Panel 3: 'Open access publishing: what's in it for us – and them?'**

#### **Abstract:**

Technological development has prompted a radical change to the approach to academic publishing. Online availability and the desire to make research outcomes as widely available as possible has led to the development of different models of open access publishing.

This Panel session will:

- Inform participants of the nature of open access publishing and different approaches to it:
  - o 'pure' open access - the online only, EJLE approach;
  - o 'green' and 'gold' open access publishing - the publishers' offer and the current LT approach.
- Provide data demonstrating the advantages of open access for authors and readers.
- Explain the current state of the relationship between the publishers, JISC and HE institutions.
- Explore participants' attitudes to the issues raised in the discussion.

This session will offer participants an opportunity to ask questions and to respond in an interactive engagement exploring their own views as to the best approaches to adopt to encouraging the widest participation in academic research, writing and scholarship.

#### **Key Words:**

Academic publishing; open access publishing; 'read and publish' agreements.

#### **Presenters:**

Professor Greta Bosch, Editor, *European Journal of Legal Education*

Professor Emeritus Anthony Bradney, Deputy Editor, *The Law Teacher*

Professor Emeritus Nigel Duncan, Consultant Editor, *EJLE* and Editorial Board member, *LT*.

## **Workshop 1: 'In your face AI! Enabling empowerment with thoroughly human skills'**

Emily Allbon

The discipline of legal design has the scope to bring so many desirable skills to the law student portfolio: empathy, client communication, problem solving, coping with uncertainty, being able to pivot quickly, strong teamwork, confidence in a multidisciplinary world and expansive thinking amongst them. It also reinforces the principles of access to justice in ways not often seen outside of clinical legal education. At a time when students need to show employers that their 'human' skills should be prized and cherished, that they offer something that AI cannot; design-thinking expertise can be seen as a valuable wildcard. Indeed, unlike the gold standard of "thinking like a lawyer", with distance and rationality, legal design practitioners thrive on being human-centred; tapping into the feelings, experiences and emotions of those who they seek to help, so that any solution is developed in the most fitting way.

This hands-on workshop will give participants the opportunity to gain expertise in some of the tools and techniques used in legal design work, in simplifying processes, documents and concepts as well as ideas on how you might be able to incorporate some of this into your existing modules. We will also explore the breadth of 'real-world' projects in the legal design world; within a law firm context, an advice centre setting and a larger international NGO collaboration. Get a taste of empowerment in Exeter!

Day 2, 17 April 2206

## **Street Law and CLE**

Audrey Cook, 'Civic Advocacy for Law Students'

This paper discusses pedagogical reflections on a workshop which introduces civic advocacy to law students. The workshop was created following student requests for opportunities to learn about advocacy in the context of alternative careers. Civic advocacy is related to the pedagogy of 'service learning,' which has a long history in the US and features in many HE disciplines including law, philanthropy and public affairs, and is now being adopted in the UK.

The workshop focuses on how advocacy skills are transferable to a range of careers. Students are presented with examples of high-profile advocates for different causes and some worked examples of civic advocacy, followed by two exercises. Exercise 1 involves how to turn a fact into a persuasive statement. Exercise 2 invites students to present a short speech or a letter to their MP to argue for a policy or law change, or to raise awareness of an issue.

There are two observations. Firstly, students value advocacy as a transferable skill in the context of both legal and alternative careers, which aligns with scholars who argue that legal education should be a forum where activism is encouraged, and the role of lawyers can expand to assist communities in finding their own voices. Secondly, emotion plays an important role in advocacy teaching. As legal educators not only can we provide opportunities for students to learn about areas they have strong feelings on, but also use emotion as part of a pedagogical strategy to foster empathy and critical engagement with advocacy subject matter.

Siobhan Cullen and Bronagh Heverin, 'The impact of AI on contemporary legal issues in Street Law programmes, delivered in secondary schools.

Street Law is a multi-faceted methodology which enhances the transferable skills of the law students who deliver the programme while raising awareness and developing legal literacy skills among the recipient audience groups. Street Law has been a module in the undergraduate law degree programmes at ATU since 2015, providing interactive workshops to Transition Year (TY) students aged 15-16 to facilitate skill and legal information acquisition.

Street Law is delivered by final year law students under supervision of law lecturers and through this experience participants acquire legal knowledge and skills, and as a result are empowered to understand legal rights and encourage “thinking like a lawyer.” Ideally this experience will address the unmet legal need of the recipient audience but this in turn creates a challenge as these needs are continuously evolving.

Street Law students undertake a three-day training course on developing workshops in legal education, and this includes a workshop on the use of AI in specific areas of law, namely migrant rights and LGBT rights, whereby the research undertaken via AI and is then compared with research undertaken via traditional legal research methodologies. The law students subsequently submit a survey which is a comparative analysis of the research and the outcomes are evaluated, based on the impact of AI. This raises awareness amongst students of the potentially detrimental impact of AI in terms of the accuracy, as well as potential advantages in raising awareness and providing information, and this enables them to consider this when delivering Street Law workshops in schools. The students then conduct a similar analysis with TY students in order to raise awareness of the limitation and potential bias involved in AI.

This paper also illustrates how public legal education can respond to current societal issues and provide diverse learning for law students in areas of law beyond their undergraduate curriculum.

The current humanitarian crisis has rendered both migrant rights and LGBT+ rights to be important and topical issues and the aim of this Street Law project is to empower communities by enhancing awareness of the humanitarian crisis and international protection laws in tertiary, secondary and potentially primary education.

The project enables third level law students to become familiar with areas of law which do not form part of their undergraduate curriculum by conducting research, engaging with community organisations and designing Street Law lessons for delivery in secondary schools, with potential to deliver similar in primary schools with the appropriate training and supervision.

The paper outlines how the sensitive nature of the legal information is transposed to AI and how the students responded to the comparative analysis between AI and traditional legal research within the inclusive pedagogy of Street Law.

Rejitha Nair, 'Human-Centred Legal Education in the AI Age: Rethinking Legal Aid Clinics from a Global South Context' (online)

As artificial intelligence increasingly automates technical legal tasks, legal education faces a pressing skills paradox: alongside AI literacy and digital competence, future lawyers must develop forms of ethical judgment, human communication, cultural understanding, and reflective professionalism that remain resistant to automation. Clinical legal education is often assumed to cultivate these human-centred capacities. However, the ability of clinics to fulfil this role varies sharply across institutional contexts.

Drawing on practice from India, a developing country where legal aid clinics are largely mandated by regulation but frequently operate as under-resourced, compliance-driven structures, this contribution argues that clinics require intentional pedagogical and structural redesign to remain educationally meaningful in the AI age. In contrast to many Western clinical models, Indian law school clinics commonly face challenges such as limited faculty continuity, weak institutional support, restricted access to field sites, and episodic community engagement, all of which risk reducing experiential learning to symbolic participation.

Responding to these constraints, the paper advances a design-based model for clinical legal education that prioritises the cultivation of AI-resilient skills through deliberate institutional choices. The model integrates internships with clinic work to secure real-world context, embeds long-term partnerships with non-governmental organisations to ensure continuity, decentralises ownership through student-led governance, and foregrounds structured capacity-building in ethics, participatory methods, and reflexive practice prior to community engagement.

Rather than proposing new clinical activities, the contribution demonstrates how intentional design can transform legal aid clinics into durable pedagogical spaces for developing ethical judgment, collaboration, cultural competence, and community engagement—capacities that complement, rather than compete with, emerging legal technologies. By foregrounding practice from a high-constraint Global South context, the paper offers transferable design principles for embedding human-centred, future-facing skills into the core law curriculum in an AI-enabled yet deeply human legal profession.

Poonam Chudasama, 'Generative AI in Legal Practice: Implications for Clinical Legal Education'

The rapid integration of Generative AI into legal practice presents both opportunities and challenges for law firms and legal education. There is a need to understand the connection between use of Generative AI in the legal profession and how that can impact teaching in clinical legal education. There is a gap in pedagogical research which explores how Solicitors and law firms regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) are adopting Generative AI tools, and the implication for those entering into the legal profession. The points to consider are whether AI is being used for client work, document drafting, research, or staff development, and whether these practices align with ethical and data protection standards.

This proposal is for a workshop to be developed into a paper based on a research project already in progress. Using a mixed-method approach, data will be collected from two groups: (1) Partners and Directors with decision-making authority in law firms, through semi-structured interviews, and (2) junior lawyers and paralegals with 18–24 months of experience, via questionnaires. The analysis will provide insights into the expectations of new entrants to the profession, the extent of AI adoption, and the perceived benefits and risks.

Findings will inform the development of clinical legal education by identifying how law schools can incorporate realistic, technology-driven experiences into curricula. This research will support digital literacy initiatives, enhance employability, and ensure that students are prepared for evolving professional practices. Ultimately, the project seeks to move beyond media narratives and provide an evidence-based understanding of AI's role in legal services

## **Legal Education and Legal Practice 2**

Kim McDonald and Lindsey Connett, 'Legal Pedagogy: Scaffolding the journey from Student to Professional' (roundtable discussion - 45 minutes)

This session examines how contemporary legal education can more intentionally scaffold students' progression from learners to capable, confident, and collaborative professionals. As the legal sector evolves demanding adaptability, interdisciplinary awareness, and strong interpersonal skills legal pedagogy must move beyond content transmission to cultivate a broader professional identity. This round-table explores five interconnected themes: professionalism, practical skills, collaboration, confidence and communication and the development of transferable competencies relevant both within and beyond legal practice.

Professionalism is considered not as hierarchy or status, but as a mindset grounded in ethical awareness, responsibility, and reflective judgment. Participants will discuss how educators can support identity formation without reinforcing traditional power structures. The session also addresses the persistent gap in practical skills such as drafting, advocacy, interviewing, negotiation, and problem-solving and how experiential and authentic learning tasks can bridge this divide.

Collaboration is framed as a core professional competency rather than a logistical challenge. The discussion will explore strategies for designing teamwork that mirrors real practice. Confidence and communication are examined as skills rooted in competence, not positional authority, with attention to techniques that help students articulate ideas clearly, self-assess effectively and engage constructively with others.

Finally, the session will explore the importance of helping students recognise the transferability of their legal training. By making explicit the broader value of analytical reasoning, structured communication and ethical decision-making, educators can empower students to navigate diverse career pathways.

Through shared experiences, challenges and innovations, participants will co-create practical interventions that strengthen the scaffolding supporting students' transition into professional life.

Shane McKinder and Charlotte Harrison, 'Barristers-in-Residence: Developing Social and Cultural Capital for Aspiring Barristers – Lessons Learned and Next Steps'

Despite sustained reform efforts to widen participation, the Bar of England and Wales continues to be experienced by many law students as inaccessible and exclusionary, particularly those educated at non-Russell Group institutions.<sup>1</sup> The profession remains heavily socially stratified: the majority of barristers are educated at Oxbridge (53 per cent) or Russell Group universities (23 per cent), with markedly lower representation from overseas institutions (12 per cent) and non-Russell Group universities (11 per cent).<sup>2</sup> Graduates from outside the Russell Group are therefore significantly underrepresented at the Bar. This paper argues that this persistent imbalance is driven in significant part by unequal access to social and cultural capital, which shapes students' access to professional networks, understanding of informal professional norms, and perceptions of legitimacy within the Bar.

These inequalities do not arise by chance. Students who attend Russell Group and other elite universities are more likely to arrive with advantages linked to their family background and schooling, such as early awareness of legal careers, access to professional contacts, and familiarity with the informal expectations of the Bar. These advantages are then strengthened within elite university environments, where professional networks and norms are more visible and more easily accessed. As a result, students at non-Russell Group institutions are placed at a disadvantage well before formal entry requirements to the profession, such as degree classification or pupillage selection, are applied.

In response to these barriers, the Barristers-in-Residence (BiR) programme is conceived as a targeted intervention aimed at developing the social and cultural capital required for progression to the Bar.<sup>3</sup> However, this paper recognises that capital-building interventions alone cannot address the full range of exclusionary dynamics. Progression to pupillage remains strongly correlated with degree classification, with applicants holding a first-class degree approximately twice as likely to succeed as those with a 2:1, and negligible progression from lower classifications.<sup>4</sup> Improving access to the Bar, therefore, requires parallel investment in academic attainment alongside the development of social and cultural capital.

This interaction is particularly salient in the context of persistent awarding gaps within UK higher education.<sup>5</sup> Black students, for example, are statistically less likely than white students to achieve a first or upper second-class degree. When a lower probability of high degree classification intersects with limited access to professional networks and informal knowledge, the cumulative effect is a significantly reduced likelihood of progression to the Bar. Structural inequality thus operates across both academic and extra-academic dimensions of legal education.

Against this backdrop, the paper presents a reflective, practice-based case study of the Barristers-in-Residence scheme at the University of Portsmouth, a non-Russell Group institution. BiR operates as an optional programme and is explicitly designed to mitigate structural disadvantage by making visible the

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<sup>1</sup> The Barrister, 'Oxbridge graduates dominate Bar pupillages, with first-class honours degrees and some how appears to be the norm' (The Barrister 2 December 2025) < <https://barristermagazine.com/oxbridge-graduates-dominate-bar-pupillages-with-first-class-honours-degrees-some-how-appears-to-be-the-norm/>> accessed 12 December 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Chambers and Partners, *The Student's guide to a career at the Bar* (Chambers and Partners 2005) 8.

<sup>3</sup> Shane McKinder, 'Barristers in Residence' (2024 University of Portsmouth) <<https://www.port.ac.uk/collaborate/business/business-services/barristers-in-residence>> accessed 12 December 2025.

<sup>4</sup> The Bar Council, 'The Bar in Numbers' (The Bar Council, 5 June 2025) <<https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/resource/the-bar-in-numbers-blog.html>> accessed 12 December 2025.

<sup>5</sup> See Li, Pei-Hsin. 2024. Student experience in HEIs: What does the evidence say about the ethnicity awarding gap? The Diversity of Student Experience Project. The Centre for Teaching and Learning. University of Oxford.

hidden curriculum of the Bar. Through sustained engagement with practising barristers, the programme seeks to develop students' professional identity, confidence, and sense of belonging, while demystifying the informal rules and expectations that shape access to the profession.

The programme comprises two complementary strands. A general strand, open to all interested students, focuses on demystifying routes into the Bar through structured interactions with barristers, thereby enhancing professional literacy and confidence beyond academic attainment. A bespoke strand provides intensive, individualised support for students actively pursuing a career at the Bar, including mentoring, guidance on Inns of Court membership and scholarship applications, and preparation for advocacy-focused recruitment processes. Central to both strands is the intentional development of social capital through access to professional and alumni networks that students from non-traditional and lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to possess independently. Moreover, many of the barristers involved in the BiR programme are alumni of the University of Portsmouth, allowing students to see clear and credible examples of individuals who have successfully progressed from the same institutional context.

The paper adopts a pedagogical research approach aligned with the ALT priority themes of inclusive learning and teaching, widening participation, employability beyond the curriculum, and student belonging. It draws on qualitative student feedback, participation data, and reflective evaluation by academic and practitioner collaborators. Student voice is central to the analysis, examining how engagement with the BiR programme influences students' confidence, aspirations, and sense of legitimacy over time, particularly among those who initially view the Bar as "not for people like me".

The paper concludes by reflecting on both the potential and the limits of initiatives that aim to build social and cultural capital within systems marked by structural inequality. It treats student apathy not as disengagement, but as a rational response to long-standing socio-economic and institutional disadvantage, and highlights the value of relational, low-stakes forms of engagement. At the same time, it acknowledges the limits of what institutional programmes can achieve without wider structural reform. Within these constraints, the paper argues that initiatives which explicitly focus on developing social and cultural capital can still make a meaningful contribution to improving access to the Bar for students educated outside elite institutions. While rooted in legal education, the BiR model is presented as relevant to other professionally gated fields where access to networks, norms, and opportunity remains uneven.

Katy Peters and Claire Lillywhite, 'Symbiotic Experiential Learning & the Interconnectivity of Legal Practice'

Like the internet, the future of the legal profession is rooted in connections and interactions: both human and digital. Generative AI can draw – and hallucinate - plausible conclusions from myriad cross-disciplinary sources. Legal technology can support novel, hybrid ways of working. However, at its core the legal profession remains embodied by and embedded within humanity. Law is inherently vulnerable because of its reliance on humanity. Whilst humans create law, they are also bounded by it. Law is therefore both a human construct and a tool by which humanity is regulated. Each is affected by the other: the relationship is symbiotic.

Symbiotic learning has been associated with fostering links between education, research and external professionals<sup>6</sup>. The simplistic premise for symbiotic experiential learning is an acknowledgment that there is a connection between legal education and the legal profession. Each has an impact upon the other. Similarly, there is a connection between law and law-adjacent disciplines which can be mutually complementary.

Responding to developments in generative AI is not just an issue of academic integrity but a question of evolving professional skills in practice<sup>7</sup>. Embedding professional skills in a legal curriculum is about more than just CV-drafting and interview preparation<sup>8</sup>. Lawyers interrogate. They challenge. Janus-like, the lawyer needs to accurately piece together an existing jigsaw, whilst also creating a multi-dimensional extension. A foot in both the past (tracing to source) and the future (generative AI evolution).

Legal education is given vitality by the opportunity to reflect on embodied legal experience and embedded access to legal practice<sup>9</sup>. This presentation will draw on case studies and reflection garnered from the creation of an LLM in Professional Legal Practice. It will explore how practitioner input can be embedded in assessment design, how the pro bono advice can benefit from student skill development and how multi-disciplinary collaboration can be a mutually beneficial way to provide novel teaching and learning environments.

To be a truly effective way of embedding functioning legal knowledge, legal education must link with the interconnected world in which legal knowledge actually functions.

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<sup>6</sup> O Eikeland, Symbiotic Learning Systems: Reorganizing and Integrating Learning Efforts and Responsibilities Between Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) and Work Places (2013) *J Knowl Econ* 4, 98–118

<sup>7</sup> LexisNexis, Fast Law: why speed is the priority for lawyers using AI (accessible at [Fast law: why speed is the priority for lawyers using AI](#))

<sup>8</sup> K Peters & E Williams, *Embedding Existing and Emerging Legal Technologies in Curriculum Design* in A Millmore (Ed) *How to Include Employability in the Law School* (2024, Edward Elgar)

<sup>9</sup> K Peters & C Lillywhite, *Using a professional training degree pathway to embed a Professional Training Year module in a law curriculum* in A Millmore (Ed) *How to Include Employability in the Law School* (2024, Edward Elgar)

## **Law, Tech and Skills**

Stuart Hargreaves, 'A case study in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a generative AI-powered simulated client used in a university-level constitutional law course' (online)

This article presents a case study in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a generative AI-powered simulated client used in a university-level constitutional law course. Developed entirely by a legal academic without prior programming experience, the project demonstrates how emerging “no-code” AI tools can enable educators to build complex, interactive learning environments at minimal cost. The simulated client – an AI voice agent named Alex Wong – was created using ElevenLabs and OpenAI systems to allow students to conduct live, voice-based client interviews within a web interface. The exercise operationalized principles of experiential learning, authentic assessment, and reflective practice, situating abstract constitutional concepts within a realistic legal problem that students had to investigate and analyze. Using a mixed-methods approach combining thematic analysis of interview transcripts, post-exercise surveys, and instructor observations, the study explores the simulation’s pedagogical effectiveness and identifies key design challenges, including the mitigation of AI “hallucination” risks and the maintenance of factual consistency. Findings suggest that the simulation successfully promoted active engagement, deeper conceptual understanding, and self-reflection among students while remaining accessible and replicable for non-technical educators. By documenting both process and outcome, the article contributes to the emerging discourse on AI as a creative pedagogical partner and offers a transparent model for integrating generative AI into experiential legal education.

Danon Pritchard, 'Developing 'next-gen' legal research skills: agile learning design to support future-ready law students and legal educators'

Commercial legal databases are standard tools within legal education in England & Wales, but premium versions of these tools incorporating Generative AI ('GenAI') functionality are being made available to academic subscribers. Whilst many larger law firms have had access to legal GenAI tools for some time, they are still an emerging development for practitioners in some smaller firms and chambers. Given the variety of tools currently in use by legal practitioners to conduct legal research, there is the potential for a digital skills gap to emerge between legal research techniques traditionally taught in legal education settings, and the digital skills required to make effective and ethical use of legal GenAI tools in legal practice settings. This position is further complicated by the regulatory requirements for demonstration of competency in professional legal research skills in SQE and Bar assessments.

This conference paper outlines an autoethnographic case study in which the author draws on their experience of piloting two legal GenAI tools, using an agile learning design methodology to produce learning content to support students' use of such tools as well as to create a 'playbook' for educators. In the technology sector, the term 'playbook' describes a strategic guide containing a documented set of strategies, processes and practices that can be replicated across different situations or contexts. The author draws on a range of emerging literature (including Magesh et al, 2025; Robb et al, 2025) and uses the TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) to explore the intersection of educators' knowledge types (which are frequently uneven in their distribution), as well as a range of AI competency frameworks, including the UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Students (2024). This paper provides an opportunity to gain practical insights into the development of learning resources supporting the use of legal GenAI tools within legal education.

Obele Akinniranye, 'Legal Technology as a Core Component of Legal Education: Reimagining a Global Curriculum for a Digital Era'

The accelerating influence of technology on legal practice demands a paradigm shift in legal education. This paper argues that Legal Technology should be treated as a core course within the law curriculum, comparable in importance to foundational subjects such as Evidence or specialized fields like Maritime Law. As law increasingly intersects with digital systems, artificial intelligence, and data-driven processes, proficiency in legal technology is no longer optional—it is essential for competent practice.

The paper examines how integrating Legal Technology as a core subject can enhance advocacy, research, and communication skills while equipping graduates to navigate emerging challenges such as algorithmic decision-making, smart contracts, and digital compliance. It contrasts traditional doctrinal courses with technology-focused instruction, demonstrating how the latter complements and reinforces core legal competencies rather than replacing them.

Further, the discussion explores global and regional regulatory frameworks governing technology in legal education, emphasizing ethical integration and compliance. It evaluates how the three academic phases—undergraduate study, postgraduate specialization, and professional training—must adapt to embed technological literacy alongside traditional legal reasoning. The analysis underscores the role of academic integrity and governance in sustaining judicial integrity within a tech-driven environment.

Ultimately, this paper provides a roadmap for a global curriculum that positions Legal Technology as a foundational pillar, ensuring graduates are not only legally proficient but also technologically agile and ethically grounded. Such integration is critical for producing future-ready lawyers capable of thriving in a rapidly evolving legal ecosystem.

Stuart Kelly and Laura McManus, 'i-Casework: simulations, systems, and student agency'.

Our proposed paper will reflect on the pedagogical design, implementation, and early evaluation of **i-Casework**, a legal case-management platform deployed within the Strathclyde Law School's Diploma in Professional Legal Practice.

i-Casework is a dedicated platform designed by Strathclyde staff. We understand it to be the only case-management platform used in Scottish postgraduate legal education. We anticipate the paper offers transferable impact regardless of jurisdiction.

Drawing on empirical classroom observation, student reflective logs, and supervisor assessment, our paper **will examine the structured exposure to a professional case-management platform** and how it shapes students' procedural competence, ethical decision-making, and digital professionalism.

Our paper will situate i-Casework within contemporary debates about simulation and technology in legal education. In particular we will consider Paul Maharg's scholarship on simulation, learning design, and the role of digital tools in cultivating professional judgement. Maharg previously worked at Strathclyde, and his pedagogical legacy has ongoing impact.

Our initial analysis suggests that integrating i-Casework into our Professional Legal Practice curriculum **promotes situated learning by making administrative and evidential practices explicit**. It also supports formative assessment through traceable activity logs. However, i-Casework raises new challenges around data protection, supervision load, and assessment design. We will not hide from discussing the problems in the integration and application of the platform.

We will consider **practical recommendations for curriculum integration**, assessment alignment, and staff development. We will position i-Casework as a case-management platform that incentivises the use of technology with the aim to produce graduates who are both practice-ready and critically literate about the use of technologies in a legal environment.

## AI and Integrity 2

Cody Rei-Anderson and Tereza Kunert, 'Artificial intelligence, professional ethics and academic integrity in legal education: Teaching strategies after *Haringey*' (45 minutes)

With the ubiquitous availability of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the wake of the 2022 release of ChatGPT, legal educators are faced with a challenge: they must continue to impart core legal skills and knowledge to students while contending with the demands of both academic integrity and legal professional ethics. Some uses of AI are clearly incompatible with these goals: if a student responds to an essay or problem question merely by copy-pasting it into a chatbot and submitting the response as their own work, they cannot be said to have demonstrated achievement of relevant learning objectives, and they have clearly breached principles of academic integrity. At the same time, a conversation continues within universities and law schools over where the line ought to be drawn: for example, the use of AI to research and find sources, summarise texts, or provide language support may be acceptable. This has led universities to adopt "traffic light"-style frameworks to define and convey to students and educators the appropriateness of different kinds of AI use. However, difficulties in defining and policing the boundaries of acceptable use continue to be worked through. Legal educators also face calls to deal with AI explicitly in the curriculum or adopt it in teaching, whether due to purported benefits for accessibility or efficiency, or because firms have begun to adopt AI tools (albeit unevenly).

Legal educators carry a responsibility towards the public to ensure that future legal practitioners will be able to provide their clients with proper advice or risk life-changing consequences. In the context of a law school, merely "treat[ing] cheating as a form of failure to demonstrate capability" is insufficient where "behavioural or ethical characteristics are desired of graduates". For entry into a profession such as the law, ethical behaviour is not merely "desirable" but essential. Legal professional ethics and academic integrity are closely related in this context—part of preparation for entry into the legal profession is understanding that lawyers have duties to their clients, the court, and the administration of justice.

The recent English case of *Haringey* demonstrates how misuse of generative AI by legal professionals can carry serious consequences, from referral to the relevant regulatory body to criminal prosecution. However, it also highlights that while academic integrity and professional ethics are broadly aligned, there is daylight between them. *Haringey* emphasises that lawyers are responsible for the legal submissions they make to a court; use of generative AI becomes a problem where it produces inaccurate or misleading information which is not then corrected by the legal professional prior to submission. In contrast, the academic integrity issue which arises when students misuse generative AI is at least twofold: first, it is dishonest and tantamount to plagiarism for a student to pass off an AI tool's work as their own. Second, using generative AI is a shortcut which can hamper students' development of core skills in legal reading, writing and analysis and acquisition of core legal knowledge, and makes assessing students' progress in these skills much more difficult. The accuracy or inaccuracy of the information produced by AI tools has little to no bearing on academic integrity; indeed, detecting AI misuse in assessment is made easier by mistakes which are unlikely to be the product of anything but a large language model, such as fabricated case or article citations.

The substance of professional ethics and academic integrity diverge insofar as legal professionals are primarily concerned with the quality of their advice, which is distinct from questions around authorship, plagiarism, and assessment validity which concern academics. Legal educators must encourage the responsible and ethical use of AI in both an academic and professional contexts. With this in mind, our workshop will explore strategies to effectively teach students about appropriate AI use, drawing on the international expertise and experience of the co-authors and participants in the workshop. Preliminary questions will include:

- Can teaching *Haringey* and cases like it provide an effective teaching tool for academic integrity and professional legal ethics?

- Does a deeper understanding of what generative AI is and what it can and cannot do contribute to students' understanding of their (present and future) ethical obligations?
- Does an emphasis on AI's shortcomings when it comes to legal questions effectively encourage responsible AI use in the classroom and workplace?
- Does making academic and professional consequences for AI misuse clear to students effectively encourage responsible AI use?
- Does an emphasis on career-building and students' desirability as future hires effectively encourage responsible AI use?
- How can legal educators help students develop critical thinking skills when evaluating AI outputs?

The results of this workshop will go towards shaping an empirical study of law students and their attitudes towards AI which the co-authors. At the conference, we would like to present our initial findings and initiate a discussion about the role of legal educators in the United Kingdom and internationally. Any feedback would help us develop strategies for shaping AI in legal education and would be incorporated into a draft paper to be published in an academic journal later in 2026.

Amy Man, 'Embedding Integrity within Legal Education'

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT has generated significant debate within Higher Education, particularly in law schools concerned about academic integrity and professional standards. While previous studies have examined whether ChatGPT can successfully complete legal assessments, this paper instead explores how core values of honesty and integrity should guide the sector's response to AI. It argues that outright prohibition of ChatGPT risks widening inequities, encouraging covert misuse, and obscuring vital lessons about professional ethics. Conversely, a laissez-faire approach that permits unrestricted use and relies solely on student self-declaration undermines meaningful engagement with integrity. The paper proposes a balanced pedagogic approach that reinforces the ethical expectations of future lawyers.

Oguchinalu Enwere, 'Responsible, ethical and inclusive integration of Artificial Intelligence into teaching and assessment' (online)

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming legal education, practice, judicial administration, and access to justice across jurisdictions. From algorithmic decision making and predictive analytics to automated legal research and digital courts, AI now plays a significant role in how law is practised and experienced. Yet legal education, particularly in many African jurisdictions, has not evolved at a commensurate pace. This disconnect raises serious concerns for legal competence, ethical practice, and the protection of fundamental rights. This paper examines the responsible, ethical, and inclusive integration of artificial intelligence into teaching and assessment within legal education. While AI-driven tools such as predictive analytics, and generative technologies offer opportunities to enhance efficiency and personalise learning, they also raise critical concerns around bias, data privacy, and academic integrity. Global scholarship emphasises the need for ethical frameworks and inclusive practices in deploying AI within higher education; however, Nigerian legal education remains largely unprepared for these challenges, given infrastructural limitations, regulatory gaps, and uneven digital literacy among the faculties in Nigeria and law students. This paper situates Nigeria's experience within global debates on AI ethics and teaching methodologies, drawing comparative insights from jurisdictions such as the UK and EU where guidelines for responsible AI use in education are emerging. It argues for a human-centered approach that prioritises accountability, and inclusivity while leveraging AI to support experiential learning and competency-based assessment. It proposes pedagogical strategies for embedding AI ethics and digital literacy into legal curricula through interdisciplinary learning, experiential methods, faculty development, and skills based assessment and fostering collaboration between academia, regulators, as well as technology providers to ensure compliance with global best practices. Ultimately, the paper contends that responsible integration of AI in legal education is essential to producing lawyers who can critically interrogate technology, uphold ethical standards, and ensure that innovation strengthens rather than undermines justice, equality and the rule of law.

## **The Future Syllabus**

John Pearson, 'The Green Future of Legal Education: The Case for Embedding Environmental Consciousness in Legal Education' (online)

'You're all climate lawyers now, whether you want to be or not,' John Kerry, former US Secretary of State and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, declared to the American Bar Association in 2021. His aim was to highlight the inevitability of interaction between lawyers and impacts of climate change, an observation which can be applied more broadly to the range of environmental crises faced by humanity.

This paper will explore potential responses to this call to attention from Kerry. It considers how to train lawyers to be equipped to respond to an inevitable future dimension for legal practice. It will be argued that this approach to legal education not only prepares students for an inevitable future which they will face, but is also a reflection of the world in which they themselves know themselves to exist. As such the paper will contend that legal education which affords environmental consciousness is not only justified but necessary.

In doing so, it will identify potential reasons for reticence to the adoption of an approach to legal education which reflects the role of law in facilitating, causing and resolving harms to, and the protection of, the environment. The exploration of potential causes for such reticence will be assessed through Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory. The idiosyncratic motivations of legal education will be explored to illustrate that reticence to integrating environmental issues fails to recognise the extant nature of legal education.

Samantha Schnobel, 'A Moment in Time: Domestic Harms and Stories Untold'

Whilst it is undoubtedly the case that the third industrial revolution has brought with it a need to educate Law students in digital innovation and literacy, this shift cannot come at the expense of cultivating emotional intelligence. In a society of increasing disconnection, both from one another, but also the self, empathy and introspection should also feature as fundamental to legal pedagogy.

In this paper, I focus on a central component within the core Torts module, police liability. Whilst in these cases, the focus is placed on traditional methods of doctrinal analysis and analogous reasoning – tools students need to understand 'the law' – frequently lost in this are the voices of the victims who found themselves at the centre of an unfolding horror story. This paper chronicles my experiences of researching the creation of a short story, taken from an important Supreme Court judgment, utilising court reports, interviews, articles, and official investigations in an attempt to re-orient the position of the victim from the periphery of the case, to the centre. I also detail the experience of reciting the story, which I constructed following a first-person, limited narration style, and the difficulties I encountered in later transposing this into teaching materials capable of fostering a deeper emotional connection with the subject matter.

Sampo Mielitiyinen and Nina Toivonen, 'Legal designers in their own words – implications for legal education'

In winter 2025–2026, the presenters are conducting a global survey on expertise in legal design. The purpose of the research is to create a nuanced, up-to-date view of how legal designers see the expertise required and how they use their expertise to deal with challenging cases. The results will be valuable in developing the methodology and theoretical frameworks of legal design, as well as for legal education. The data will be analyzed with qualitative content analysis, using the holistic model of expert wisdom by Tynjälä, Heikkinen and Kallio as the theoretical framework.

In the presentation, we will share our preliminary results, focusing on two questions:

1. How do legal design practitioners perceive the expertise required in legal design? - The analysis will show in detail what a human-centred, designerly legal work entails and requires. The results will be presented as a model of legal design expertise, distinguishing theoretical knowledge, experiential knowledge, sociocultural knowledge, self-regulation, problem solving skills, emotional dimensions and the social responsibility of legal design.
2. How does the model of legal design expertise enrich our view of the legal curriculum in the AI age? – We will discuss the pedagogical opportunities and conclusions implied by the legal design expertise model together with the conference participants.

Our presentation pertains to the following themes of the conference: legal design thinking, legal skills, and human-centered legal education. In addition to presenting the first empirically grounded model of legal designers' expertise, the theoretical framework included may inspire other scholars in studying legal competences. Our survey has already approximately 40 respondents and will close on 31 January 2026, providing an excellent basis for our conference presentation.

Murtaza Mohiqi, 'Teaching for Futures We Must Prevent: Dark Scenario Pedagogy in Legal Education' (online)

Legal education is increasingly oriented towards “futureproofing” graduates for a rapidly transforming legal profession. Much of this discourse, however, remains grounded in narratives of optimisation, innovation and adaptation, implicitly treating technological futures as inevitable and desirable. This paper challenges that assumption by asking a different pedagogical question: what if legal education should prepare students not only for the futures that are coming, but also for the futures that must be actively resisted?

Drawing on critical legal theory, human rights scholarship, and teaching experience across the Global North and Global South, the paper introduces dark scenario pedagogy as an experimental approach to teaching law. Dark scenarios depict deliberately dystopian, yet plausible legal futures shaped by unchecked legal technologies, algorithmic governance, climate breakdown, authoritarian data regimes, and the erosion of the rule of law. Rather than treating such futures as speculative fiction, students are invited to analyse them as legally actionable realities.

The paper demonstrates how dark scenario pedagogy enables students to: (1) identify early warning signs of legal and human rights collapse embedded within seemingly neutral technologies; (2) interrogate the limits of professional ethics and legal responsibility under conditions of technological coercion; and (3) cultivate skills of resistance, refusal and legal imagination that are rarely foregrounded in mainstream legal curricula.

By shifting the focus from “innovation” to prevention, this approach reframes future-oriented legal education as a human-centred, rights-based and politically conscious practice. The paper argues that teaching for futures we must prevent is not pessimistic, but pedagogically necessary in a moment when law is increasingly mobilised to legitimise technological harm. Dark scenario pedagogy offers a concrete method for reimagining legal education as a site of critical foresight, ethical courage and collective responsibility.

## **Challenges Beyond AI, 1**

Peter Underwood and David Yuratich, 'Caveat Educator: The Student-Consumer in Legal Education'

A web of law and regulation now operates to position students as 'consumers' of a higher education 'product'. One of the consequences of the consumer framework, even where that framework is well-intentioned, is that students have increasingly developed an identity and behaviours wherein they act as a 'consumer', rather than as a 'learner' (Taylor Bunce, 2023). This raises a number of issues for higher education teaching and for law teaching in particular. As legal education becomes framed in more transactional terms, and with the possibility of fees being linked to TEF outcomes assessed by metrics such as the NSS, there is a risk that law schools, and academics within them, are incentivised to prioritise popularity over pedagogical integrity. Such behaviours are detrimental both to the student experience and to sound teaching practice. Where rigorous pedagogy conflicts with "what the customer wants," institutional frameworks risk endorsing the maxim that the customer is always right. Yet education is not a commodity in the conventional sense. When purchasing bananas, a consumer knows precisely what they want; the transaction is simple. In contrast, students seek education precisely because they do not yet know what they need to learn. We argue that conceptualising students as consumers misrepresents the nature of learning and risks reducing higher education to a transactional exchange.



Michael Randall and Alannah McPhee, 'At a Crossroads: Sustaining Law and Modern Language Degree Programmes in the UK'

In an era of global interdependence law students and law graduates are required to navigate a complex international legal context. Law and Modern Language (LML) degree programmes help students to navigate this reality. Despite their clear value, these programmes face structural pressures that threaten their sustainability and raise broader questions on the forms of legal education that are valued, accessible and viable. This paper engages with the debate by examining the contribution that LML degrees provide to legal education, the reasons for their precarity, and asks what the future holds for LML degrees.

This paper firstly underscores the historical advantages that LML degrees provide relative to a standard law degree. These intellectual, professional and intercultural benefits of LML pathways are not confined to their participants and have a collective value, demonstrating what could be lost if these degree options disappear.

Secondly, the paper will detail the challenges that LML degree programmes face in the UK (including an overview by country). Particular attention is given to the tensions between maintaining rigorous linguistic and legal training and widening participation aims. Without targeted support, LML programmes risk becoming an elite privilege, rather than a meaningful option for a diverse student body.

Finally, the paper will ask a pertinent question: what should the future of LML programmes be within legal education? The conclusion asks whether to protect the existing models, or pursue alternative forms of provision to promote their sustainability, but compromising the integrity of the original pedagogical aims of LML pathways.

### Ali Struthers, 'School Tasking: the Disasters'

In academia, we spend a lot of time recounting in meticulous detail the aspects of our work that go to plan and yield noteworthy results. The Academy is, and always has been, about success: about things going right and, if we're being brutally honest, about obfuscating anything that might have gone wrong before it happened to go right. At a conference in 2024, Dr Simon Sneddon, Associate Professor in Learning and Teaching at the University of Northampton, implored us as an academic collective to talk more openly about our failures. So, here goes.

This presentation will reflect on the more challenging aspects of the journey of School Tasking, the university-led outreach project that is now running as a national competition across 30+ universities in the UK and Ireland. I've written and presented plenty of times about School Tasking's successes and, therefore, in this presentation, I will instead provide honest reflections on the obstacles that the project has faced. I do so in the hope that it might not only inspire others to similarly reveal the hurdles and setbacks that inevitably underpin any polished account of a successful project in academia, but also in case it may help in alleviating or overcoming some of these widespread barriers to innovative practice in legal education.

## **Pedagogy Old and New 1**

Hannah Gibbons-Jones and Richard Hyde, 'Reading Cases: What we know, what we need to know and what we have yet to find out'

This paper will be underpinned by the findings of the Understanding Legal Literacy and Disciplinary Skills (U.L.L.a.D.S) Pilot Project. The object of this study is to gather information to support a practical change in disciplinary literacy advice and to develop guidance for law students in a time where the use of A.I and the availability information short-cuts is increasing. Over Semester One 2025-26 the research team has collected data from first year undergraduate law students on their individual reading history and experience of reading primary sources upon entering the degree. Additionally, this research has included reading experiments using eye tracking technology to examine the strategies used by students to navigate primary sources in comparison to non-disciplinary sources.

The aim of the research team is to increase understanding of reading literacy (specifically how law students engage with discipline-based communication) and provide further insight into the reading skills of students transitioning into law school. It is hoped that the data collected will support researchers to identify specific challenges that students experience and to develop scholarship support for students who are challenged by the navigation and formatting of legal texts.

Adam Nicholls, 'Thinking outside the bot: Generative AI and the Future of Legal Education'

This paper addresses the theme of the future of legal education but also relates to several other themes for the conference, such as: gamification, experiential learning opportunities, human-centered legal education.

This paper explores the educational value of generative AI through a project employing ChatGPT and custom GPTs to simulate realistic legal scenarios, such as client interviews, cross examinations, debates. Simulated learning has long been embedded in disciplines such as medicine, engineering, and aviation, where it provides a safe and controlled environment for learners to apply theory, test judgment, and develop professional competence before engaging with real-world scenarios. Law students can similarly develop fact finding, application, and ethical reasoning skills through immersive, low-risk environments that bridge the gap between academic study and professional practice.

In this way the project builds on the traditional use of problem questions in legal education, offering a more immersive and skills-focused approach. For example, instead of receiving a pre-packaged scenario, students must conduct a simulated client conference to draw out the relevant facts in a structured and efficient manner. They are then expected to explain and apply the law to the client's situation, mimicking the steps of real-world legal practice. The GPT concludes the session by offering tailored feedback to the student, encouraging reflection and reinforcing key learning points. The GPTs created for this project simulate activities such as client interviews, legal debates, cross examination and negotiation exercises.

The paper will reflect on the design process, pedagogical rationale, implementation challenges, and student feedback. It will also critically consider the limitations of AI in replicating nuanced human interaction, the ethical boundaries of AI-assisted learning, and the need to preserve the affective and interpersonal dimensions of legal education.

Should my paper be selected, I would be open to contributing to a joint panel alongside Dr Hermione Hague and Dr Laura McBrien from the University of Edinburgh. Their submitted abstract explores similar themes around the use of AI simulations in legal education. I have previously met with them and I am familiar with their work in this area, which aligns closely with my own. Our shared focus on using AI to simulate professional practice and develop core legal skills would lend itself well to a collaborative discussion.

Emmanuel Nartey, 'Towards a Dynamic Skills Ecosystem'

Legal education faces increasing pressure to equip graduates for a profession in which human judgement and AI capability must operate in partnership. Yet current competency frameworks remain largely static and fail to reflect how legal work is being reshaped by automation, data analytics, and hybrid human-machine decision processes. This article refocuses the debate by examining how the core co-existence of humans and AI can be deliberately embedded in higher-education teaching and learning to strengthen the employability skills of future legal professionals. Drawing on scholarship from legal pedagogy, socio-legal studies, AI ethics, and future-of-work research, the article identifies the conceptual gaps that limit existing educational responses—particularly inadequate attention to bias, accountability, epistemic legitimacy, and the uneven implications of AI adoption. In response, it develops a human-AI employability model that reconceptualises legal capability as an adaptive set of cognitive, socio-emotional, and ethical competencies that evolve through sustained interaction with intelligent technologies. The article makes two contributions. First, it explains how human and AI capacities jointly create value in contemporary legal practice, clarifying the distinct yet complementary roles of judgement, creativity, and relational expertise. Second, it translates this model into practical guidance for curriculum and assessment design, showing how AI-supported personalisation, experiential learning, and reflective practice can be implemented in HEIs without undermining fairness, autonomy, or professional integrity. The article therefore offers a focused, theoretically grounded, and pedagogically actionable account of how human-AI coexistence can be used to develop the employability of legal graduates.

Louise Loder and Camilla Gee, 'Infusing the Core Curriculum with Key Employability & Human Skills'

Dr Louise Loder and Camilla Gee are convenors of the core Legal Foundations modules at Streatham (Louise, 740 students) and Penryn (Camilla, 165 students). Louise is the Director of Employability in the Streatham Law School, and Camilla is Director of Employability & Placements at the Cornwall Law School in Penryn.

At Streatham, Louise has redesigned the module since becoming convenor in 2023 to provide a robust and well-rounded experience for first years to meaningfully develop their core legal, academic and professional skills. This has involved strengthening the module's approach to traditional legal academic skills such as essay writing, ILAC and research but also infusing the module with practical and employability-rich learning opportunities, including the 'Digital Lawyer' workshops on AI-driven legal research, legal project management, legal information design, and soft skills such as cultural competence and communication. She has also developed an 'Experiencing the Law' topic series that gives students the opportunity to critically explore access to justice, freedom of expression, and trauma-informed practice through the lens of public inquiries including the Post Office Scandal and Inquiry, the Covid Inquiry, the Leveson Inquiry and the Manchester Arena bombing inquiry. Other workshops encourage students to engage with the Sustainable Development Goals and to consider the influence of the media and popular culture, especially literature, theatre and documentary film, in shaping public perceptions of the law, legal professionals, the justice system and human rights.

At Penryn, Camilla created the Legal Foundations modules for the LLB Law with Business and BBL Business and Laws programmes when they were launched in 2019. The modules have been regularly updated now incorporating workshops on key academic skills in the first term, alongside critical examination of topics including access to justice and professional ethics. Throughout the second term students work in teams engaging with real-world case study and use role-play to bring the law to life. In their 'law firms' they work together to create a firm charter and then act for a client, initially being introduced to the facts of the case by interviewing their clients and witnesses. Researching the law and preparing their arguments, the students then attempt to negotiate a settlement, developing teamwork and legal practice skills along the way. The module culminates in a series of 3.5-hour mock tribunal hearings in front of practicing employment lawyers and salaried employment judges. Second year students can apply to sit as wing members, providing them with a further opportunity to collaborate with practitioners and see the delivery of justice from another angle.

In this joint presentation, Louise and Camilla will share their experiences of convening a core first year legal system / legal skills module, and the approaches they have each taken to embedding key employability, sustainability and human skills development into the first year curriculum.

## **Panel 5: ‘The necessity of critical legal pedagogies on race and empire in HE to reimagining legal education’**

### Panel introduction

One could argue quite confidently that through the interwoven processes of racialised enslavement and extractive colonisation, the last 500 years of human history have been fundamentally influenced by the manufacture and use of race to create human hierarchies and to produce material difference across human populations on a global scale. The effects of these are carried on into the present, exemplified by racial violence, extreme inequality and environmental devastation. Law has played complex, often paradoxical, roles in the foregoing processes – institutionalising imperialism/racism as well as serving as a recourse for colonised and racialised populations resisting imperialism/racism. This has had a profound nature on the world we live in and the nature of the law we teach, research and practice. Essentially, it is impossible to re-imagine the future or rethink the world from a position that tenaciously preserves the permanence of the colonial project. Recently, more legal scholars have begun including anti-colonial and anti-racist research in their teaching to examine – with their students – how colonial histories have influenced law and society.

### Abstract

As teachers of law in the present, it is imperative to find language for this attempt at teaching the world anew. One of the ways this has been addressed has been through measures to “decolonise the curriculum/law school.” Nevertheless, these particular efforts often do not achieve their intended outcomes due to various factors, such as misunderstandings about decolonisation, misinterpretations of colonialism, and limited research into how race operates within the continuing and changing contexts of the colonial project. A critical response to the permanence of colonialism invites an unsettling of all the concepts and structures that produce the conditions of our present, including the mechanics of decolonisation. Rather than ask, for example: “how do we decolonise the law curriculum?”, we need to develop tools and concepts to critically examine how curriculum content and its norms are produced through a colonial history and present, and to consider how this inquiry might shape future teaching, research, and practice. The panel and paper will further explore: why it is imperative for the future of legal education to adopt critical pedagogies of race and empire; some practical aspects of adopting these approaches; some of the questions that arise in the implement of this imperative, as well as the beginning of a vision of the future of legal education that breaks from the limitations of the colonial project.

### AI as a Freirean Tool for Decolonising Higher Education: A Qualitative Case Study in Law

**Dr Jade Kouletakis [j.kouletakis@abertay.ac.uk](mailto:j.kouletakis@abertay.ac.uk) Dundee Business School, Abertay University**

### Abstract

By way of a small-scale, exploratory and qualitative case study, this article offers a new conceptualisation of AI as simultaneously perpetuating and resisting the coloniality of knowledge matrix. This is, to the best of the author’s knowledge, among the first studies relating AI in curriculum design to established theoretical frameworks in decoloniality and critical pedagogy. When used critically, AI has the potential to support a Freirean deconstructing of knowledge held by the dominant elites and may present opportunities for teachers and students to problem pose. However, AI cannot replace teachers’ active participation in developing their own critical consciousness and co-constructing knowledge to meaningfully challenge the dominant elites. An uncritical over-reliance on AI as a source of knowledge could perpetuate epistemic injustice, reinforce existing knowledge hierarchies and replace collaborative learning with the Freirean banking model.

Law Students as Co-Producers of Knowledge in Decolonising the Curriculum: Outcomes of a Student-Staff Partnership.

**Dr Renginee G. Pillay** [R.Pillay@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:R.Pillay@greenwich.ac.uk) School of Law and Criminology, University of Greenwich

### Abstract

This paper focuses on a co-produced research project where undergraduate law students and academic staff collaboratively examined how the law curriculum could be meaningfully decolonised within a post-1992 UK university context. Through focus groups and reflexive collaboration, we sought to (1) understand students' perspectives on what 'decolonising the curriculum' entails and (2) co-develop actionable recommendations for embedding anti-racist, inclusive content and pedagogy. Our findings highlight the necessity for reflective pedagogy, co-creation with students, and a decolonial framing that challenges the enduring legacies of empire and racial hierarchies in legal education.

Rooted in the ethos of student-staff partnership, this project frames students as active co-creators of knowledge, resisting the traditional role of passive recipients of Eurocentric legal doctrine. By embedding student voices into curriculum review and development, the project champions inclusive and transformative pedagogies that interrogate how colonial power dynamics continue to shape legal knowledge, content, and teaching methods. Rather than positioning decolonisation as a fixed goal or checklist, we approach it as a reflective, ongoing process that requires continuous collaboration, humility, and an awareness of systemic power relations (Andreotti, 2011).

This work speaks directly to the persistence of Eurocentric content and the marginalisation of global and minority perspectives in legal education (Bhambra, Gebrial & Nişancioğlu, 2018). It contributes to ongoing conversations around anti-racist pedagogies and provides a critical lens through which to re-imagine the structures and processes of legal knowledge production. By rethinking how we teach and learn about law, the project challenges the legacy of empire within legal education and offers a vision for a more just, inclusive, and decolonised future.

## **Workshop 2: ‘Growing Confidence and Opportunities Through Law Placements’**

Charlie King

The University of Exeter Law School has been a forerunner in developing a Law programme including a year-long placement. Now in its 8th year, valuable lessons have been learned about both the undeniable benefits of undertaking a placement, and the challenges involved in maximising our students’ prospects of securing a placement.

This workshop aims to provide an experiential insight into the innovative law placement workshops incorporated into the programme. The workshop will utilise a blend of approaches, in the same manner as the law placement workshops, including information sharing, confidence-building warm-up games, exploration of self-reflection, and an assessment centre task.

Workshop structure:

- Introduction – discussion of benefits of a placement programme, incorporating consideration of data, including qualitative data from students/employers.
- Warm-up exercise (interdisciplinary approach, incorporating performing arts practices).
- Self-Reflection – discussion of incorporating self-reflection as a central skill, from year 1 to year 3 assessment. Including exploration of literature and practice around building confidence (one of our self-reflection themes) and group task.
- Mock-assessment centre – Following an explanation of the often-arduous recruitment processes our students will face, not only as graduates, but oftentimes when applying for work experience (including vacation schemes), participants will then have the opportunity to participate in a real-world assessment centre task.
- Reflective discussion – participants will be invited to engage in open discussion, reflecting on their workshop experiences and exploring ideas for redeveloping the law curriculum to more effectively prepare students for the realities of graduate recruitment.

## **Partnerships and Belonging 2**

Dara Akanmidu, 'Exploring Barriers to Black Students' Experience of Belonging in Higher Education' (online)

The link between student belonging and achievement is well established. Evidence demonstrates that students' sense of belonging while at university plays a significant role in their academic achievement, persistence with their studies and overall wellbeing.

Consequently, using focus groups, this paper explores black students' experience of belonging and the barriers to their sense of belonging within the context of a UK law school. It finds that black students' experience unique barriers to their sense of belonging. This includes difficulties in connecting with other students, racism and prejudice and a lack of diversity and representation. These barriers create an isolating environment for black students which in turn hinders their sense of belonging within the law school and university. Considering these findings, this paper argues that academic departments need to take a more active role, and tailored approach, in promoting black students' sense of belonging. To achieve this, they would need to implement measures such as support network for black students, increase diversity and representation among academic and support staff, improve specialist support services for black students, and introduce anti-racism or prejudice education among the staff and student body.

Stephen Bunbury, 'Reimagining Authentic Assessment for an Inclusive Future: Decolonising Curriculum Design Through Student-Staff Partnership'

This paper examines how student–staff partnership can drive inclusive, future-focused pedagogic innovation within legal education. Situated within a progressive, practice-informed module designed around situated knowledge, the study explores how diverse students experience assessment and how their insights can shape the development of more authentic, human-centred forms of evaluation. Through qualitative focus groups and semi-structured interviews, we investigated the relationship between diversity, inclusion and authenticity in assessment, asking how assessments can be reimagined so that all learners recognise themselves (and their lived experiences) within the curriculum.

Findings demonstrate that co-designing assessments with students increases relevance, engagement and perceived fairness, while also supporting wider institutional commitments to decolonisation, equality, and inclusive curriculum design. Student testimonies highlighted clear preferences for assessment formats that mirror real-world legal practice, provide meaningful choice, and enable personal investment. These insights directly informed changes to the module’s assessment structure and are now influencing broader university teaching and assessment policy.

The study contributes to current debates on the future of legal education by evidencing how authentic assessment can serve as a vehicle for embedding EDI principles, enhancing student belonging, and preparing learners for the evolving legal profession, including its increasing emphasis on human-centred practice, reflective capacity and ethical judgment. The findings also offer practical strategies for law schools seeking to diversify their assessments, decolonise curricula, and align their pedagogic approaches with the emerging skills, values, and competencies required for the future of law.

Neeti Shikha, 'From Digital Inclusion to Empowerment: Humanising Legal Learning through Co-Creation and Belonging' (online)

This paper introduces a triadic model for reimagining legal education that moves beyond digital inclusion towards genuine digital empowerment. Centred on inclusion, experiential learning, and reflective digital pedagogy, the model seeks to humanise the learner experience and prepare graduates for a rapidly changing, technology-driven legal profession.

The model evolved through sustained reflection on postgraduate teaching in *Corporate Governance* and *International Financial Crime* to diverse cohorts including international students, young parents, and mature learners adapting to the expectations of independent study at Level 7 in the UK. Many students experienced initial uncertainty in navigating academic conventions and the UK-centric focus of the curriculum, alongside the practical challenges of balancing work, family, and study. The pedagogical question became how to design learning environments that engage, involve, and empower such learners while recognising their complex lived realities and the structural inequities that shape their learning experience.

### **Inclusive Communication and Scaffolding**

Teaching design was underpinned by respect for learners and a commitment to equality of opportunity. Weekly "Friday Round-Ups" summarised key legal and ethical issues, linked doctrine to contemporary global events, and clarified learning outcomes for each session. This consistent, conversational communication built relational trust and continuity, particularly for students balancing professional or caring responsibilities. Scaffolded assessment design and formative checkpoints promoted clarity, reduced anxiety, and enabled learners to develop confidence and feedback literacy progressively.

### **Experiential and Human-Centred Learning**

Curriculum design embedded experiential and problem-based learning to address disengagement with abstract doctrine. Simulation workshops invited students to inhabit practitioner, regulator, and stakeholder perspectives, experiencing the complexities of corporate governance and financial regulation first-hand. Student-led case studies connected law to their own jurisdictions and professional contexts, affirming global perspectives and recognising the broader social and educational context.

### **Digital Co-Creation and Empowerment**

Recognising that technology can reinforce exclusion if not intentionally humanised, collaborative digital platforms such as wikis, interactive polls, and asynchronous discussions were used to create supportive, accessible learning environments. Students became co-creators of learning resources, strengthening ownership and digital literacy while engaging in authentic, reflective dialogue. Continuous reflection, peer observation, and engagement with professional development in blended and inclusive digital learning informed ongoing refinement of assessment and curriculum design.

### **Impact and Significance**

The integration of inclusive communication, experiential learning, and digital co-creation generated demonstrable impact. Attendance and engagement scores improved substantially; students reported greater motivation and clarity; and qualitative feedback revealed enhanced belonging and confidence in applying legal analysis to practice-based scenarios. Comments such as "I felt seen and supported" and "I could finally relate the law to my world" captured the transformative effect of the approach. Colleagues subsequently adopted aspects of this design, extending its influence beyond individual modules.

When technology is reframed as a relational tool that fosters empathy, autonomy, and collaboration, it becomes a means of empowerment rather than exclusion. Although developed within legal education, this model offers a transferable pedagogical framework across disciplines where abstract or localised content risks alienating diverse learners.

This work exemplifies the integrated practice of designing and planning learning; teaching and supporting learners; assessing and giving feedback; developing inclusive and flexible learning environments; and engaging in continuing professional development to enhance practice while drawing on knowledge of learning theory, digital pedagogy, and disciplinary expertise, and embodying the professional values of respect, inclusion, collaboration, and evidence-informed reflection.

Aligned with the ALT 2026 theme, *Reimagining Legal Education for the Future of Law*, this paper demonstrates how an inclusive and human-centred approach can bridge the digital divide, foster belonging, and cultivate globally responsive, ethically grounded legal professionals prepared for the demands of a changing world.

The paper will be presented as a Lightbulb Talk, showcasing key moments of pedagogical innovation and their transformative impact on learner engagement and empowerment.



Apeksha Gandhi, 'Teaching Law Through Making: Creative Pedagogies for Honest Student Engagement'

This paper explores the transformative potential of play as a decolonial pedagogical method in legal education to invite critical and honest student engagement. It situates creative pedagogies and practices as a crucial resistive force to the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the study and practice of law. Drawing on a workshop I facilitated for students and staff – combining doll-making and poetry-writing to facilitate conversations around identity, politics and self-love – and student responses to a classroom activity 'visualising law as a person', this paper demonstrates how imaginative practices rooted in arts-based research can elicit honest and critical reflection that is rarely achieved through traditional legal education.

The proliferation of AI tools in recent years makes aspects of legal education that centre human experiences, relationality and imagination more – not less – important. Dialogic, engaged and creative methods serve as powerful decolonial interventions to legal education, cultivating classroom spaces that foster vulnerability and reveal embodied experiences and understandings of the law. Ultimately, this paper argues that reimagining legal education to respond to AI-mediated futures primarily involves humanising legal education; decolonial pedagogical practices and methods help to nurture and centre creativity, criticality and resistance to normative practices, readying students for socially just futures.

Sonya Onwu, 'Elite institutions and the (im)possibility of decolonising legal study skills'

The way that students are taught to think about and engage with law is fundamentally centred upon the epistemic silencing and exclusion of particular ways of knowing. Decolonising legal thinking requires disrupting deeply entrenched narratives of law as objective and neutral to make space for ways of thinking that privilege standpoint and positionality - necessary preconditions for decolonial thought. Yet, this disruption does not come easily in an educational system that leaves students unprepared for the critical demands of higher education. The emphasis on rote learning in further education places little, if any, emphasis on, and even actively discourages critical and independent thought. Having been taught not to question, law students must learn not only (how) to think about law, but (how) to question it. This lack of critical ability culminates in an inability, unwillingness, and/or a lack of confidence in forming and holding opinions about law. Thus, before we can begin to disrupt, we must dismantle not only the false narratives, but the very way in which we teach students to engage with law, beginning with giving them the skills and confidence to question and challenge law's mythology.

My contention here is that creating critical legal thinkers starts with the foundations – the learning of academic legal skills. This paper draws upon my experience over the last eight years of (re)creating and (re)designing LL100 Legal Study Skills (LSS), a core first year course for all LLB and Law and Anthropology students at the London School of Economics (LSE) Law School. It discusses the evolution of my approach, moving from simply teaching students the foundational skills needed to transition to studying law at university – how to read cases, articles, answer essays and problem questions, to one which centres opinion and worldview. Empowering and enabling students to disrupt and dismantle requires a conscious and deliberate personalising of their engagement with questions of the 'how to' of law that then informs their engagement with broader questions around the 'what' of law. The paper ends by offering some reflections on the difficulties and (im)possibilities of creating confident thinkers with the capacity to critically question, challenge, and actively resist the mythologies of law from within an elite Russell Group institution such as the LSE.

Israel Okunwaye, 'Inclusive curriculum through affirming active participatory classroom: a legal education' (online)

In achieving the goals of a credible learning future in legal education I argue there is need to build a more participatory and interactive classroom. Drawing from arguments by Walker, Boni, and Velasco (2023) suggests value should be placed on each individual's knowledge contribution towards building their future. Abrams (2024) would also argue Socratic teaching methods allows for class interactions in the teaching of law through robust use of questioning technique on prepared legal briefs for a law class. Key questions remain, whether we should allow for the presumption that both teachers and students can make valid perspectives to how the law can be reformed, and assist shape legislative enactments and judicial decisions in consultative forums. How then can a law class routinely prepare students and acknowledge them through opportunity and engagement as part of the law module delivery. But perhaps more crucially, whether there is cognitive evidence interactive engagement makes for better understanding in learning, and if in the affirmative, if the model application should be encouraged in schools to strengthen further interest in this field of study.

## **Pedagogy Old and New 2**

Jenny Kemp, 'Introducing the International Law Vocabulary Highlighter' (online)

This session will introduce the [International Law Highlighter](#), a new freely available online vocabulary tool funded by the *ALT Small Grant Scheme* in 2025. The interdisciplinary project aimed to create, introduce and evaluate a tool to help LLM students from non-UK and/or non-law backgrounds, who can be disadvantaged in terms of academic literacy for law, particularly reading.

Kemp had identified a list of 1026 law-specific words which comprise 26% of the words in LLM private/public international law texts. These words characterise legal genres both statistically and in the opinion of law lecturers, and greatly contribute to the understanding of text. However, lecturers do not generally teach these words. The tool highlights these wordlist items, enabling students to independently identify and prioritise unfamiliar words. Language/skills teachers can also use the tool for materials and lesson development. To evaluate the project, students at Leicester and Leeds were trained to use the tool and their opinions sought via questionnaire and focus groups. In this session, the tool will be demonstrated. This will be followed by a discussion of its potential and the feedback so far received.

Alan Ma, 'From Hallucination to Reflection: Embedding AI-Emotional Literacy in Legal Education'

The rapid adoption of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in legal practice presents both expanding possibilities and new vulnerabilities. Since the Ayinde & Al-Haroun [2025] judgment revealed eighteen fictitious citations in a barrister's submission, courts and regulators have increasingly scrutinised similar incidents of *AI hallucination*. Subsequent cases across practice areas have shown how fabricated authorities can lead to disciplinary referral, reputational damage, and even criminal liability. These machine-generated errors have added further pressure to an already demanding profession, affecting not only junior counsel but also senior practitioners responsible for oversight.

The legal profession continues to report some of the highest levels of stress and burnout among graduates, with more than 60 per cent of UK lawyers experiencing mental-health strain linked to workload and performance anxiety (LawCare, 2023). The death of Vanessa Ford, a partner at Pinsent Masons, tragically underscored the human cost of such stress. As AI errors can now trigger regulatory scrutiny, reputational harm, and personal crisis, *AI hallucination* represents a new class of error—unintentional, machine-generated, yet professionally consequential.

While university legal education increasingly addresses the technical and ethical use of AI, there remains little structured pedagogy that develops the affective and ethical dimensions of working with AI outputs. Building on Hackathon I and II research project involving over 600 students, this paper outlines a series of workshops within Birmingham City University's Legal Tech curriculum that explore students' emotional and cognitive responses to AI hallucinations. The study will gather empirical data on frustration, over-confidence, and anxiety, and evaluate how experiential learning improves verification strategies and emotional regulation.

Law schools must move beyond technical competence to cultivate emotional resilience, ethical communication, and reflective judgment. The proposed framework of **AI-Emotional Literacy**—integrating digital competence, ethical awareness, and affective learning—aims to prepare future lawyers to think, feel, and act responsibly in an AI-augmented legal landscape.

Andy Unger and Lucia Otoyó, 'A year of making "AI tutors in your pocket": a critical evaluation'

Over the past year, we have piloted a series of bespoke generative AI learning tools, which we describe as AI "tutors in your pocket", embedded across law and interdisciplinary law and technology modules. This paper offers a critical evaluation of that work, focusing on pedagogical intent, student experience, and implications for legal education.

The presenters report on the design, implementation and evaluation of several custom GPT-based tools developed specifically to support student learning rather than assessment completion. These include:

- a **Practice Management Tutor** for a Law and Technology module supporting interdisciplinary group projects that design access to justice LawTech resources;
- a **Feedback Tutor** providing formative, dialogic feedback on draft coursework;
- an **LLB Contract Law AI Tutor** designed to support seminar preparation for first year students through structured questioning and explanation; and
- an **interactive Commercial Contract Law negotiation and drafting exercise**, simulating realistic legal practice scenarios.

Drawing on student feedback, usage patterns, and reflective teaching evaluation, the paper examines how students actually engage with these tools, what they perceive as beneficial or problematic, and how AI-mediated support shapes learning behaviours. Particular attention is paid to concerns frequently raised within legal education, including dependency, surface learning, erosion of legal reasoning skills, and academic integrity, alongside potential benefits such as increased confidence, accessibility, and opportunities for low-stakes practice.

The session will situate these findings within current debates on generative AI in higher education and legal education specifically, arguing that the educational impact of AI tutors is highly contingent on design choices, framing, and integration into curricula. The paper concludes by inviting discussion on whether such tools meaningfully support legal learning, risk undermining it, or require a reconceptualisation of how we define independent learning in the age of generative AI.

## **Panel 6: Addressing differential outcomes for minority ethnic candidates in legal professional assessments'**

In 2021 the SRA commissioned research in response to differential outcomes in legal professional assessments in England and Wales. The SRA annual education and training monitoring reports showed long standing and widely acknowledged differential outcomes for candidates from different ethnicities in legal qualifications, such as the LPC, and the regulator wanted to understand better the reasons for this and what might be done to overcome the issue.

Persistent differential outcomes for minority ethnic candidates in legal professional assessments raise profound questions about fairness, legitimacy, and ethical responsibility within legal education, the legal profession, and the regulator's responsibility. Disparities in legal professional assessments are persistent, pervasive and continue to reflect structural inequities. Legal education, in a broad sense- arguing that we need to take a life cycle approach-, needs to be re-imagined to achieve a more representative profession, as an institution, one that fulfils an effective public service role, modelling the rule of law, access to justice, a fair process, and the protection of rights.

The interdisciplinary research team at Exeter (Professor Greta Bosch (PI), Professor Ruth Sealy, Professor Konstantinos Alexandris-Polomarkakis, Dr Damilola Makanju, Professor Rebecca Helm) explored the potential causes of these outcomes over two years, taking a mixed method and multi-level approach. This work identified a complex range of educational, socio-economic and social factors which disproportionately affect candidates from a minority ethnic background. These factors are likely to continue to impact candidate performance, progression retention, thus even beyond their legal professional assessment.

The final project report made recommendations to the SRA as the regulator, the HE sector and the profession. The report recommended that stakeholders should collaborate to address the complex mix of factors effectively, and that the regulator should take the lead as change agent.

Since publication of the report and its recommendations, the SRA has taken a proactive role in action planning and targeted initiatives, by taking a leading role in bringing stakeholders together for effective action planning, the sharing of best practice and the reporting on specific actions based on the report's recommendations. The spirit is one of action, dialogue and collaboration between all three sectors: the regulator, the profession and law schools. With collaboration at the forefront, there is long term commitment for ongoing work and constructive co-creation. The real game changer is the effective collaboration across the three sectors.

Against this background, the aim of the panel of experts (representing the regulator, legal education at Law Schools, an SQE assessment provider and the profession) is tripartite:

- Share best practice; For experts from these (stakeholder) sectors to share their experience and insight on the initiatives targeted at addressing the differential outcomes in legal professional assessments and within the profession by minority ethnic candidates (as recommended by the report),
  
- Collaborate; Offer a dynamic platform for experts from the three sectors to exchange ideas, insights and most current developments in their field, in the spirit of sharing best practice (as recommended by the report), such as a toolkit to support closer co-operation, and/or the interface supporting candidates in preparation for the SQE,

- Co-create to change policy; Invite delegates at a major national legal education conference to participate and interact with the current developments and concrete initiatives to address differential outcomes, providing an immediate opportunity to collaborate and share what has been done and is planned in the context legal education in the broadest sense.

Regulators, legal educators, and the profession as a whole bear a collective ethical duty to take steps to promote equal opportunity in access to the profession, equal opportunity to succeed in the profession and for the profession to represent the society it serves. This panel, two years since publication of the research report and recommendations, will allow the speakers to articulate what has happened as a result since the publication of the final report and its recommendations, taking the discussion to the next level.