

Singapore Declaration on Global Standards and Outcomes of a Legal Education

The following principles outline global standards and outcomes of a legal education.

These principles establish a baseline and a common language for future efforts to improve legal education.

Global Standards for a Legal Education

1. Regulation

Regulation of legal education and internal law school governance should be:

- i. Formulated with law faculty input and be subject to domestic, and where appropriate, international peer review;
- ii. Objective;
- iii. Transparent;
- iv. Verifiable;
- v. Consistently applied;
- vi. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms; and
- vii. Jurisdictionally specific.

2. Students

A. Selection of Students

It is recognized that admission standards should be based on established local criteria taking into consideration the jurisdiction's public policy as to admission criteria of students into higher education.

Student selection should be:

- i. Objective;
- ii. Transparent;
- iii. Verifiable;
- iv. Consistently applied; and
- v. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms.

B. Evaluation of Students

Student evaluations should be incorporated in a comprehensive legal educational program to enable law graduates to attain the outcomes specified in the Statement of Principles: Outcomes for a Legal Education. They should be:

- i. Objective;
- ii. Transparent;
- iii. Verifiable;
- iv. Consistently applied,
- v. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms.

It is recognized that there are a variety of forms of student evaluation which vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, as well as from institution to institution.

3. Faculty

It is recognized that local standards, needs and resources guide the recruitment, evaluation, advancement and retention of law faculty.

Local standards should be:

- i. Objective;
- ii. Transparent;
- iii. Verifiable;
- iv. Consistently applied;
- v. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms.

4. Curriculum

It is recognized that there are many methodologies in teaching law. All such methods should inform the faculty as to how best to educate their students in the context of local needs and resources.

Local standards should be:

- i. In conformity with established local criteria and policies;
- ii. Comprehensive and flexible;
- iii. Tied to the Principles of a Global Standard for Outcomes of a Legal Education;
- iv. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms; and
- v. Subject to periodic domestic, and where appropriate, international peer review

It is recognized that there is a growing emphasis on formative rather than purely summative evaluations of student performance.

5. Infrastructure – Physical, Technological and Administrative

It is recognized that the physical, technological, as well as access to legal resources and the administrative infrastructure of an educational institution are fundamental in achieving the Outcomes of a Legal Education. It is also recognized that educational institutions must work within the context of the resources available within their jurisdiction.

Infrastructure should be:

- i. Sufficient and adequate to enable the institution to achieve the Outcomes of a Legal Education;
- ii. Informed by evolving domestic and international norms; and
- iii. Subject to periodic domestic, and, where appropriate, international peer review.

Outcomes of a Legal Education

A. Knowledge

A law graduate should know and understand:

- i. The core areas of substantive and procedural law;
- ii. How laws are created, implemented and changed; and
- iii. The contextual underpinnings of the operation of law (both domestically and globally).

B. Skills

A law graduate should be proficient in:

- i. General academic skills, including critical analysis and reasoning;
- ii. Researching, reading and analysing legal materials;
- iii. Problem solving, planning and strategizing how to comply with legal requirements; and
- iv. Constructing a legal position and effectively communicating (orally and in writing) within a legal context.

C. Values

A law graduate should know and understand the need to act in accordance with:

- i. The professional ethics of the jurisdiction; and
- ii. The fundamental principles of justice and the rule of law.

Adopted by the International Association of Law Schools at the inaugural Global Law Deans' Forum, held at the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law, 26 September 2013.