

Feedback Form

Proposed revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses

ABOUT YOU

Name/organisation:

Christopher Roper AM

Over the last five years I have, on behalf of the Victorian Legal Admissions Board, undertaken re-accreditation reviews of law courses leading to admission to practice at six Victorian law schools, and am at present undertaking a further review.

YOUR FEEDBACK

Consultation Question 1: Do you support the drafting of the proposed revisions set out in the Draft Revised Standards? We are interested in the reasons for your view and suggestions for improved drafting.

Please provide your feedback below:

1.1	Online delivery of law courses Refer to Draft Revised Standards: • New clause 4.1 (The delivery of the law course) • Ancillary adjustments to clause 4.6 (Teaching of the law course and active learning) for synchronous online learning • Clause 2.1 adjusted and new definitions for “online”, “delivery mode”, “in-person” and “synchronous online learning” • Clause 2.1 deletion of the “face-to-face” definition The Standards are structured such that each standard has three parts – the statement of the Standard itself, ie. what should be in place; an Explanatory Note; and a part entitled “How can a law school show that it has met this standard?”. The new standard 4.1 does not reflect this structural approach. It is not a statement of what should be in place but rather is an explanatory note, indicating to law schools what delivery modes are acceptable. It may be best if the new clause 4.1 were part of the explanatory note for the new standard 4.6. This new standard 4.1 does not have the part entitled “How can a law school show that it has met this standard?”, and if such a question were asked it becomes clear that there is no standard to be met.
1.2	Teaching hours, active learning and student engagement Refer to Draft Revised Standards: • Revisions to clauses 4.5 (Content of the law course) and 4.6 (Teaching the law course) • Clause 2.1 new definitions for “delivery mode” and “teaching method”, as well as for “active learning” and “direct interaction”

	A similar comment to that made above in regard to new standard 4.1 can be made in regard to new standard 4.6 dot point 3 and new standard 4.7 dot point 3. In both cases the statement of the standard is really an explanatory note and would be better included at that part.
1.3	Invigilated assessments Refer to Draft Revised Standards: • Revisions to clause 4.7 (Assessing understanding and competence), • Clause 2.1 new definitions for “assessment method” and “invigilation” I have no comments in regard to these revisions.
1.4	Intensives and block learning models Refer to Draft Revised Standards: • Revisions to clause 4.3 (The duration of the law course) I have no comments in regard to this revision.
1.5	Other minor revisions Refer to Draft Revised Standards: • Clause 2.1 new definitions for “law course” and “unit” and accompanying revisions • Updates to the definition of “prescribed areas of knowledge” at clause 2.1 and elsewhere to include statutory interpretation I have no comments in regard to these revisions.

Consultation Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed transitional period for the final Revised Standards? If not, why not?

Please provide your feedback below:

2	Transitional period I have no comment in regard to this proposal except to support it.
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Consultation Question 3: Do you have any other comments in relation to this work that you would like to provide to the Committees?

Please provide your feedback below:

3	Other comments The current wording of new standard 4.4 appears to require that <u>all</u> of the statement of learning outcomes for the law course must be “directed to enabling students to acquire and demonstrate appropriate understanding and competence in the prescribed areas of knowledge and statutory interpretation”. A law school may have learning outcomes for the
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	law course in addition to or other than this outcome. I therefore suggest that the new standard 4.4 should be re-worded as follows: “The statement of learning outcomes for the law course includes one or more outcomes that are directed to enabling students to acquire and demonstrate appropriate understanding and competence in the prescribed areas of knowledge and statutory interpretation”. I further suggest that section (b)(i) be slightly amended to read “set out the relevant learning outcome/s for the law course”.
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