

Feedback Form: Review of practical legal training

Respondent details

Name: ANU Law School

Organisation (if applicable): Australian National University

Contact details: Professor Ryan Goss [REDACTED]
Head of School
ANU Law School

A/Professor Wayne Morgan ADE.CLGP@anu.edu.au
Associate Dean Education
ANU College of Law, Governance, and Policy

A/Professor Rebekah McWhirter [REDACTED]
Education Director
ANU Law School

Are you responding as (select one):

- ☐ Individual
- ☒ Organisation
- ☐ Peak body / Representative group
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Jurisdiction (select one)

- ☐ National
- ☒ Australian Capital Territory
- ☐ New South Wales
- ☐ Northern Territory
- ☐ Queensland
- ☐ South Australia
- ☐ Tasmania
- ☐ Victoria
- ☐ Western Australia
- ☐ Multiple
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

Your submission will be shared with the Admissions Committee and the Law Admissions Consultative Committee and may also be shared with the Legal Services Council.

Unless stakeholders advise us otherwise, submissions may be published on the Council's website.

May we publish your response on the Legal Services Council's website (select one)?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No



13 May 2026

ANU Law School responses to PLT consultation questions

We welcome the chance to provide feedback on the proposed PLT changes.

This feedback response has been prepared by the ANU Law School and the ANU College of Law, Governance, and Policy.

Ryan Goss
Head of School
ANU Law School

Wayne Morgan
Associate Dean Education
ANU CLGP

Rebekah McWhirter
Education Director
ANU Law School

Law courses	
1.1	Do you support the proposal for the LACC to amend the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses to require law courses to demonstrate how they have included practical teaching and training of the practical skills identified at Appendix F, with appropriate assessment? ANU Law School has concerns about amending the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses in this way. Priestley courses are already dense and specialised courses with limited capacity/ room for extra material and extra assessment. We do not think that further pressure should be placed on law courses, and especially Priestley courses, by incorporating a longer list of skills, or by incorporating skills unsuited in courses designed for the academic study of law. We therefore do not support the amendment of the Accreditation Standards to incorporate everything currently listed in Appendix F. Law schools have neither the resources, the professional expertise (in many cases) nor the space in law courses for the incorporation of further skills. Further, some legal academics have no employment history in practice, having been recruited for world-class excellence in research and teaching for example. It is therefore unrealistic to expect them to incorporate further practice-based skills. While some law schools may be in a position to hire additional new staff with extensive practitioner experience, this will not be financially possible for many law schools, and will not always be a good fit with broader university hiring practices and expectations. Reform of PLT should not drive reform of university-based law courses. In this respect we agree with the CALD that any reform of university-based law courses should be approached holistically and be within the control of law schools. It is important to note, within that context, and as noted in the LACC Consultation paper on PLT and in Appendix F, that law schools <i>already choose</i> to incorporate a variety of practical skills, with appropriate assessment, in law courses. In law courses at the ANU Law School, for example, skills such as communication skills, collaboration and teamwork, court processes and advocacy, legal research, ethics and professional responsibility, and responsible use of technology are all already incorporated, to varying extents. At ANU Law School, many other crucial skills (not necessarily specifically itemised in Appendix F) are also incorporated. These skills include critical thinking, legal problem solving and how to construct legal

	arguments suitable for different fora such as courts, law reform processes and parliamentary inquiries, and elements of skills pertaining to cultural competency and knowledge related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. At ANU Law School, our elective courses also incorporate significant experiential learning opportunities, including internships, clinics and practicums. All of these embed skills to a high degree. We are aware that colleagues with clinical expertise are also making their own submissions in this regard. We at ANU Law School are proud of the world-class education our students receive. But for all the reasons above, the preference of ANU Law School is to continue to maintain the autonomy to deliver skills training in ways that reflect our students' needs, our staff expertise and budget, and our academic freedom and priorities.
1.2	Do you suggest any amendments to the proposed skills schedule (Appendix F) in respect of the knowledge areas and skills to be included in the delivery of law courses, as identified in column three of the table? Should a proposal proceed to amend the Accreditation Standards, the list of skills and the way in which they would be incorporated should be fully negotiated with law schools. This could perhaps be done through CALD. Law schools must be able to retain sufficient autonomy to decide for themselves which skills and to what extent those skills will be incorporated. For example, if the proposal were to proceed, it is unlikely the ANU Law School would choose to incorporate skills into existing Priestley courses. This is because such courses are already designed to achieve their learning outcomes in the hours allocated, and further material/skills cannot be added without material being cut. If the proposal were to proceed, ANU Law School might need the autonomy to instead, propose <i>one or more new dedicated compulsory courses</i> to cover the necessary skills. This is not our preferred option, for the reasons above, but also because it would likely mean reducing the number of <i>substantive elective</i> law courses our students could complete. Finally, our Education experts have concerns about whether Appendix F is fit for purpose in the 21st century and for diverse forms of legal practice. Further consultation with law schools/CALD and with various branches of the profession (private, government and public interest practice, as well as regional and remote practice) would need to take place.
1.3	Would law schools be able to implement these changes by the beginning of the 2028 academic year, as proposed? 2028 is unrealistic. Our Education experts here advise that University timelines require an 18 to 24-month period, once design is complete, to approve substantial changes to externally accredited law courses. Designing the necessary changes would take at least 12 months. For the reasons noted above, the hiring of appropriate staff must also be factored in. As a result, consultation with our Education experts here suggests it may not be possible to begin the teaching of the newly designed law courses before 2030. It should further be noted that, according to the advice of our Education experts, University and TEQSA regulations may also require that existing students should be taught according to the rules of the degree as those rules stood at the time that they enrolled. Graduates under the amended requirements (assuming a 2030 start), therefore, may not begin to graduate until the end of 2033 (single degree) and 2034 (double degree). For the reasons above, it would be difficult to "retrofit" existing law courses to ensure that all post-2030 graduates are certified as possessing a revised list of skills.