

**SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT FOR LAW
AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL**



**A PUBLICATION OF THE FACULTY OF LAW
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO
SRI LANKA**

SBS for Law at undergraduate level at the Faculty of Law

First Edition (January 2022)

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FOREWORD

As the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne has stated in her message to the *Colombo Law Review - Symposium 2020 Special Edition*, the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo is “the considered benchmark of legal studies at national and regional levels.” The work connected with the development of a Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Law at undergraduate level in the four year course of study leading to the conferment of the degree Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) is an important part of the overall quality assurance framework that supports the maintenance of academic standards and the furtherance and dissemination of good practice in the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo. I am glad that this work that was begun in July 2021 has now been completed.

The Committee appointed for the purpose of formulating our SBS by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Law consisted of Hon. Justice (Dr.) Saleem Marsoof, President’s Counsel (Chairman), Prof. W. Indira Nanayakkara, Prof. Shanthi Segarajasingham, Prof. Wasantha Seneviratne, Prof A. Sarveswaran, Mr. Menaka Harankawa, Dr. Udapadie Liyanage, Dr. Dinesha Samararatne, Dr. U.A.T. Udayangani, Dr. Dilini Pathirana, and myself. The Committee had seven meetings to finalise its draft, which was then submitted to the Faculty Board to be considered at a Special Board Meeting and approved on 24th January 2022

This Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) will support and promote quality and standards at the Bachelor’s (LL.B) degree level by:

- providing the Faculty of Law with a common and explicit reference point for internal and external programme approval and review;
- guiding and promoting curriculum development, which is an ongoing process in the Faculty of Law;
- providing a clear and transparent reference point to external examiners;
- evolving and refining the content of legal education imparted at the Faculty of Law to meet the needs of society both local and global in a manner that is responsive and reflects innovation and development;
- providing an authoritative and widely recognised statement of the expectations of a graduate in law in a form readily accessible to students, the legal community, employers and others with a stake in higher education; and
- assisting international comparison and competitiveness of its law degree and student achievements.

This Subject Benchmark Statement will be subjected to periodic revision and updating.



Dr. Sampath Punchihewa,
Dean, Faculty of Law

24 January, 2022.

SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT FOR LAW AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Faculty of Law – A brief Overview

The Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo being the only Faculty of Law in the entire public University system of the country is the oldest and pre-eminent academic institution providing legal education in Sri Lanka. The Faculty of Law had its origins as the Department of Law in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya in 1947, and was relocated in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ceylon, Colombo in 1965. It was upgraded as the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo in 1967.

While the Faculty of Law as well as its predecessor, the Department of Law has been committed to providing high-quality legal education and producing pathbreaking legal scholarship responding to social challenges, from the very inception the medium of instruction for the Bachelor of Law (LL.B) course of study was English. However, from the Academic Year 1971-1972, the Bachelor of Law course became available in Sinhalese and Tamil as well. In order to facilitate the process of Sinhala and Tamil media students improving their knowledge of English necessary to read textbooks and other legal material including judgements in English, an English Language Unit was also set up. Though the duration of the course of study leading to the award of the Bachelors' degree in law was initially 3 years, from the academic year of 1981-1982, the course was converted into a 4-year honours programme. The Colombo Law Review and the Sri Lanka Journal of International Law are the flagship publications of the Faculty, while the Colombo Law Journal is its primary student journal.

It is noteworthy that the Faculty of Law was restructured in 2009 on the recommendation of the Faculty Board to establish three departments focusing on a wide spectrum of legal studies, and with the approval of the Senate and the Council of the University of Colombo three departments, namely the Department of Private and Comparative Law, the Department of Public and International Law and the Department of Commercial Law were created. The rationale for this restructuring was that departmentalisation would allow for further development and deepening of expertise in the various areas of law covered by the said departments. As the largest department of the Faculty, the Department of Private and Comparative Law concentrates on private law in a comparative perspective, whilst the Department of Public and International Law focuses on public law-related subjects both at national and international levels. The Department of Commercial Law mainly focuses on corporate law and commercial activities carried on locally as well as globally including applicable regulatory measures.

In addition, the Faculty of Law has several units established for specific purposes related to its vision and mission. The Centre for the Study of Human Rights (CSHR) is one such unit which carries out programmes and projects under its mandate of human rights education. Furthermore, the recently established Center for Environmental Law and Policy (CELP) is dedicated to building a platform for research, collaborations, and learning in environment-related issues to build an environmentally conscious society. Another critical establishment is the Legal Research Unit (LRU) of the Faculty initiated as a partnership with the Ministry of

Justice to facilitate a comprehensive research agenda with a multi-disciplinary focus and collaboration with other lawmaking and law teaching institutions.

It is also important to mention the Legal Aid Unit (LAU), the Career Guidance Unit (CGU) and the Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) which add to the resources of the Faculty of Law. The Legal Aid Unit focuses on clinical legal education and training undergraduates in lawyering skills with inputs on social justice by providing them with opportunities to engage with legal practitioners committed to providing essential legal services *pro bono* to those who do not otherwise have access to justice. The Career Guidance Unit (CGU) of the Faculty of Law is committed to supporting undergraduates to develop their employability by developing their career education and career management skills. The Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) is responsible for regularly monitoring quality performance by assessing and evaluating faculty activities in all its academic programmes and units to promote productivity and development. In addition, it seeks to establish and safeguard high standards and good practices in teaching, learning and assessment.

The Faculty of Law conducts various degree programmes and other courses in the field of law. The LL.B Degree programme is the predominant degree offered by the Faculty. More than one thousand undergraduates annually pursue their LL. B degree, and as of 2021, there are one thousand seventy law undergraduates (1070) spread over its four years of study. In addition, the Faculty of Law has been a forerunner in postgraduate studies in law. It currently offers a taught Master of Laws (LL.M) which span one academic year with approximately two hundred (200) students selected through very competitive interviews. Furthermore, the Faculty of Law offers research degrees in law, namely MPhil/PhD Law, which promotes advanced legal research on cutting-edge legal issues. In 2021 seventy (70) candidates were registered for both of these research degrees through rigorous interviews, and these numbers are expected to grow in the years to come.

In addition to the aforesaid degree courses, the faculty also conducts several short courses in law under each department's purview to improve the community's legal knowledge in areas such as commercial law, labour law, and public law. These courses range from certificates to diplomas and are conducted in all three languages: Sinhalese, Tamil, and English. Currently, the Department of Commercial Law offers a Certificate Course in Business Law and a Diploma course in Commercial Law. In addition, the Department of Private and Comparative Law offers an Advanced Certificate course in Human Resource Management Law and the Department of Public and International law offers courses leading to the award of a Diploma in Public Law, an Advanced Certificate in Fundamentals of Criminal Law and an Advanced Certificate in Environmental Law.

The growth of the Faculty of Law as the country's pioneer legal educational institution is reflected in its staff strength currently consisting of forty-four (44) full-time academic staff supplemented by guest and visiting staff, postgraduate supervisors of academic work and examiners. Permanent academic staff of the Faculty of Law range from professors to probationary lecturers with national, comparative, international, and interdisciplinary commitments. Across the three departments, there are five (5) Professors, seven (7) Senior Lecturers (Grade I), eleven (11) Senior Lecturers (Grade II), three (3) Senior Lecturers (Transitional) and eighteen (18) Lecturers, who perform various academic and administrative functions in their respective Departments and levels of work. They are assisted by twenty (20) non-academic staff.

1.2 Scope and Purpose

This benchmark statement is applicable to the undergraduate programme of study for the conferment of the degree Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) at the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo. This programme is for full-time study of law over a period of four years. A separate benchmark statement will be issued for post-graduate study programmes in due course.

These benchmarks describe the minimum levels of subject-specific skills, generic skills and values that may be expected of a graduate at the time of passing out from the Faculty of Law on the successful completion of this programme of study. To that end, this document describes benchmarks for teaching, learning, skills development and assessment within the curriculum. It includes minimum levels of skills that undergraduates are expected to develop in curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities offered by the Faculty of Law.

The purpose of this Statement of benchmarks is to:

- 1) Clarify the minimum levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes that the Faculty of Law expects its graduates to demonstrate on successful completion of the programme of study;
- 2) Locate these expectations within the context of legal education at the undergraduate level in Sri Lanka;
- 3) Develop legal education as a social science with all necessary skills of application in a manner that can facilitate future careers in law; and
- 4) Clarify minimum standards of skills development at the undergraduate level in comparison with national, regional and global benchmarks for legal education.

1.3 Level of Teaching

The scope of teaching and learning at the undergraduate level is for:

- 1) The introduction of principles and values that underpin and shape each subject in the curriculum [*legal thought*];
- 2) Familiarity with applicable legal instruments including the Constitution, Acts of Parliament, Statutes of Provincial Councils, subsidiary legislation and applicable international treaties [*substantive and procedural law*];
- 3) Engagement with scholarly debates on a given subject at the national, regional and international levels [*legal reasoning*]; and
- 4) Debate and discussion of applicable legal principles and values in the light of historical and contemporary developments [*legal argumentation*].

Accordingly, on the successful completion of the programme of study at the Faculty of Law, a graduate will be able to:

- 1) Identify, explain and evaluate an aspect of the core areas of law by drawing on relevant values, principles, applicable legal provisions, judicial interpretation and relevant international law [*legal sources, substantive and procedural law*];
- 2) Discuss an aspect of the core areas of law in light of historical and contemporary developments and identify gaps and prospects for further development [*application*];

- 3) Distinguish between what ‘the law is’ and ‘what the law ought to be’ in the backdrop of changing socio-economic needs and developments in science and technology [*Is and ought*]; and
- 4) Apply, with reason, the principles and values of law to problems (*social, political, economic, environmental etc*).

1.4 Nature and Content of the Subject

The study of law at the undergraduate level takes account of the following features of the law in Sri Lanka’s legal system in its global context:

- 1) Law in Sri Lanka includes the Constitution, Acts of Parliament and other legislation including Statutes of Provincial Councils and subsidiary legislation, all applicable laws including personal laws in the backdrop of the Roman-Dutch law based Common Law, principles of English law to the extent applicable in Sri Lanka and operative principles of international law;
- 2) Sri Lanka’s geographical location, political history and economic needs require that Sri Lanka’s legal system relates to and engages with regional and global legal developments, including scientific and technological developments;
- 3) Sri Lankan society is plural, with strong traditions of a welfare state and an export-driven economy;
- 4) In the Sri Lankan context, the legal system reflects the diversity of its mixed cultural heritage with a Roman-Dutch law based Common law functioning as residual law, and the study of law must be necessarily comparative in nature.
- 5) Rapid globalization which is a phenomenon that continues to transform the world and how people interact with each other and do business also takes pride of place in modern legal education; and
- 6) The inherent quality of law, which by its nature requires engagement with other disciplines and as such may on occasion require an inter-disciplinary, a trans-disciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary approach to the study of law.

The review, development and implementation of curricula and co-curricular activities will take account of these aspects of the law in the Sri Lankan context.

2. SUBJECT AIMS

2.1 The primary aims are to enable law graduates to:

- (a) acquaint themselves with principles and values of ethics, law and justice;
- (b) engage in informed reading in a disciplined manner and comprehend texts in their historical and contemporary contexts;
- (c) develop intellectual ability and lone learning aptitude to acquire new knowledge associated with novel concepts;
- (d) acquire research and evaluation skills to access knowledge, evaluate relevant information and arrive at conclusions;
- (e) adopt legal theories, principles and concepts to solve legal problems;
- (f) access, analyse and apply the law;
- (g) develop intellectual capacity and pedagogical skills that shall convey the richness and the resources of the subject;
- (h) develop critical thinking to offer considered and sensitive responses to issues reflected in day-to-day work;
- (i) communicate effectively and express themselves with competence, clarity and coherence verbally and in writing;
- (j) collaborate in groups to achieve common goals;
- (k) acquire skills that may be useful for careers in the field of law including academia, administration and the legal profession;
- (l) develop subject-specific and generic/transferable skills which may be of benefit in achieving career goals and the society in general;
- (m) acquire research, analytical and evaluation skills to assess legal knowledge in the backdrop of the needs of society;
- (n) detect gaps in the law and finds ways to solve ensuing legal problems and including law reform;
- (o) respect the intellectual work of others and to abide by legal norms and ethical requirements of law related to law-related careers including the legal profession;
- (p) develop moral integrity and appreciate the value of character building;
- (q) develop responsible citizenship and leadership.
- (r) develop sensitivity towards other cultures and traditions reflected through legal and other relevant literature; and
- (s) be law-abiding not by force but by instinct.

2.2 Secondary aims are to enable the Faculty of Law to:

- (a) align with the qualification descriptors of the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) for Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) honours degree programmes known as K-SAM (knowledge; skills; attitudes; and mindset); and
- (b) Meet the objectives of the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) under the general guidance of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka (UGC).

3. SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

In formulating this Statement, the Faculty of Law is mindful that a law degree is foremost an academic qualification in the realm of humanities and provides a route to a range of careers, the legal profession being just one career option. Law graduates do not, by virtue of their degree, have a right to practice law professionally. It is expected that in their study of law in the context of society, law graduates acquire a knowledge of the law and jurisprudence, general intellectual skills and certain other skills that are specific to the study of law. A balance has to be maintained between the acquisition of legal knowledge, general intellectual skills and subject-specific skills in a curriculum.

As an intellectual discipline, Law is placed under Humanities and Social Sciences generally. However, the law impacts all of life. The law encapsulates within it concepts, theories, principles, statutes, treaties and decided cases. A sound background in each of these areas enable graduates to solve all types of law-related issues that are before them. The discipline of law involves many subjects that are diverse in nature and new areas will emerge that may demand an inter-disciplinary approach though it is impossible for a degree awarding institute to offer or teach every related subject/topic. Instead, an understanding of core areas will enable graduates to solve all types of legal issues regardless of their specific area of expertise. It is possible that the emphasis placed on subjects may differ and it may reflect the interest and expertise of the staff as well as the resources at their disposal for the time being. However, the common denominator is the competency of the undergraduates to apply their understanding of legal principles, rules, doctrines and values to any given scenario in a reasoned and objective manner.

The study of law is no more limited to domestic laws. In the modern world which has been likened to a global village, an understanding of the main features and principles of international law and certain other major legal systems have become essential. Thus, the study of law involves an understanding of international standards and doctrines with comparative insights from other selected jurisdictions to draw from their strengths and avoid their weaknesses in a manner that enriches our understanding of the law. The law graduate should be able to appreciate the relationships between individuals, between individuals and other entities including the State in the studying national laws and those of other chosen jurisdictions.

It is also important for law undergraduates to be conscious of the fact that law is shaped by and impacts on ethical values. Law undergraduates should acquire not just understanding of the law but also the ability to appreciate the law as a creation of the human mind and human conduct which necessarily manifests the values and ethics of those who make and apply it. Thus, the process of securing justice and achieving public interest is also considered as part of legal study. Law students should be able to understand how ethical issues are addressed in the context of various situations and be able to engage in discussions relating to ethical questions and dilemmas that arise in law. The student should also be conscious of the features of ethical decision making, and be able to link social, political, environmental, and economic norms with legal concepts. Such study can enhance not only skills of moving and deal with people but also the ability to understand how factors such as the environment, politics, and economics impact on legal decision making.

It is also useful to set out in brief the progression of the study of law in the Faculty of Law. In the course of the four-year undergraduate programme of studies leading to the degree of Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) at the faculty, the first two years only core subjects are offered that

lay the foundation for students to understand the basic aspects of law and thereby develop skills to understand, define, describe, recite, demonstrate, discuss, explain, report, and review theories, concepts, and provisions of the law including case law. In years 3 and 4 certain core subjects are offered with certain optional subjects provided by the Department of Private and Comparative Law, the Department of Public and International Law and the Department of Commercial Law. The objective of this progression of study is that at the end of the fourth year the students should be able to apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate legal issues, and conundrums, and grapple with ease with legal issues and problems that may arise in the course of their future careers.

4. SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

4.1 Generic Skills

General skills include the ability to-

- (a) identify relevant sources and extract relevant information;
- (b) read and interpret information in the relevant sources;
- (c) acquire knowledge in current developments nationally and internationally;
- (d) critically and logically reflect on the information gathered from relevant sources;
- (e) critically relate the information to the issues and problems;
- (f) identify issues and problems (cognitive skills);
- (g) independently and in-depth study the subject areas in law and assimilation of facts;
- (h) develop and enhance communication, listening, reading, enquiring and presentation skills;
- (i) analyse the subject areas in law;
- (j) critically and logically reflect on the subject areas in law;
- (k) relate the relevant concepts and theories to the issues and problems;
- (l) make logical arguments with justifications;
- (m) make own judgments on the issues and problems;
- (n) solve legal problems;
- (o) engage in creative thinking and problem-solving;
- (p) contextualise law to the civil, political, economic, social and cultural issues;
- (q) identify gaps in the law;
- (r) present arguments, conclusions and opinions with precision;
- (s) work in groups and network with others;
- (t) manage the time efficiently and economically;
- (u) manage work effectively;
- (v) organise meetings, consultations, and other relevant activities;
- (w) use information and other technologies effectively; and
- (x) work under pressure;

4.2 Legal Skills

Legal skills include the ability to-

- (a) identify and apply all legal norms;
- (b) appreciate and apply values derived from legal norms pursuant to applicable legal theory;
- (c) use legal terminology with precision;
- (d) read and comprehend constitutional, legislative and regulatory provisions, judgments and other legal instruments including international conventions and treaties;
- (e) read comprehend said laws and legal instruments in their social, historical, political, scientific, technological and legal context;
- (f) interpret and apply laws and legal instruments in their proper contexts;
- (g) ask and answer cogent questions to independently arrive at legal conclusions;
- (h) identify grey areas of law and engage in critical analysis and evaluation;
- (g) develop legal arguments on the basis of applicable laws, legal instruments, policy and legal theory;

- (h) identify counter-arguments on the same basis to arrive at sound, objective and independent conclusions through proper evaluation process;
- (i) engage in professional development in law; and
- (j) make suggestions for law reform.

4.3 Attitudes

The right attitude includes the ability to-

- (a) uphold the rule of law;
- (b) practice professionalism;
- (c) respect and recognise the dignity of others;
- (d) respect the views and opinions of others;
- (e) follow and maintain ethical standards;
- (f) respect diversity and multi-culturalism;
- (g) appropriately respond to exploitation and abuse; and
- (h) practise trustworthiness and display integrity.

4.4. Scope for Employment

While many graduates find employment in the public sector, semi-government sector and the private sector, the majority of Sri Lankan law graduates enter into legal practice. Some law graduates find work opportunities in International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations (local and international) as well. The following are primary areas/places of employments for law graduates:

- (a) Official Bar
- (b) Private Bar
- (c) Judicial Service
- (d) Legal Draftsman's Department
- (e) Legal Firms
- (f) Academic Institutions
- (g) Government Sector including Civil Service Administration
- (h) Banking, Tax, Insurance Sector
- (i) Private Sector
- (j) Diplomatic Missions
- (k) International Organisations
- (l) Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (BENCHMARK STANDARDS)

This section will focus on the general and excellent standards of achievement expected from the law graduates of the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo. These standards relate to the areas of subject knowledge, skills, attitudes and mindset of a prospective law graduate, based upon the perceived national and international norms. These ‘threshold’ standards describe the minimum to be achieved by all law graduates, who will in the future hope to productively engage in private practice or in diverse careers as public officials, corporate counsel, legal advisers and consultants in both local and international organisations, in the business world, in the community or occupy positions in universities and other institutions of higher learning as academics.

5.1 Relevant factors

The factors selected as the basis for differentiation between the two categories of achievement (general standards and excellent standards) are the range and consistency of demonstration as follows:-

- (a) level of academic skills including critical-thinking and analysis;
- (b) research;
- (c) problem-solving;
- (d) communication and collaboration;
- (e) advocacy;
- (f) ethical, academic and professional responsibility;
- (g) commitment to academic or professional development; and
- (h) the benefit to society.

5.2 Threshold standards

On graduating with a special degree in Law, students are expected to possess and demonstrate-

- (a) knowledge of the fundamental rules of domestic and international law including the underlying principles and concepts forming part of the legal system of Sri Lanka;
- (b) an understanding of the broader contexts within which legal issues may arise;
- (c) an insightful perspective on the principles and values of justice and of ethical practice;
- (d) the ability to recognise, reflect upon and respond to, ethical issues likely to arise in professional contexts;
- (e) competency in applying legal reasoning and research to generate appropriate responses to legal issues;
- (f) the ability to engage in critical analysis and make a reasoned choice amongst alternatives;
- (g) the capacity to think creatively in approaching legal issues and generating appropriate responses;
- (h) intellectual and practical skills needed to identify research, evaluate and synthesise relevant factual, legal and policy issues;
- (i) an ability to communicate in ways that are effective, appropriate, and persuasive with legal and non-legal audiences.

- (j) the capacity to learn and work independently; and
- (k) the ability to reflect on and assess their own capabilities and performance, and make use of feedback as appropriate, to support personal and professional development.

6. SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT FOR LAW

6.1 Benchmark standards

The minimum or threshold level of achievement expected to be reached by all graduates with a Bachelor's degree in Law (LL.B) are described below:-

6.2 Competencies and Qualities of Mind - Generic

Important competencies and qualities of mind acquired through the study of law are readily transferable to many occupations and careers. Some of these qualities and abilities are generic, in that they are imparted by most degree courses in the humanities and social sciences. But degree-level study in law also instils ways of thinking that are intrinsic to the subject, while being no less transferable. These include an appreciation of the complexity of legal concepts, a sound knowledge of the rules and principles of law, a respect for context and evidence, and a greater awareness of the importance of the principles of justice and the rule of law to the foundations of society and their relevance to other disciplines such as social science, politics, history, economics, business, information technology, biotechnology, philosophy, and ethics.

6.3 Competencies and Qualities of Mind – Specific

The following list of skills and qualities of mind is designed to be comprehensive but is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive. The order is not indicative of priority.

A graduate passing out with a Bachelor's degree in law with honours from the Faculty of Law is expected to demonstrate-

- (a) awareness of concepts, principles and values of ethics, law and justice in the context of society;
- (b) competency in handling diverse legal principles and provisions in its national and global contexts and the ability to choose the applicable law to specific situations;
- (c) the ability to cope with intersections of the law with other disciplines such as humanities, politics, human resource management, history, economics, business, information technology, biotechnology, philosophy and ethics;
- (d) intellectual independence, including the ability to ask and answer cogent questions about law and legal systems, identify gaps in their own knowledge and acquire new knowledge, and engage in critical analysis and evaluation;
- (e) self-management, including an ability to reflect on their own learning, make effective use of feedback, a willingness to acknowledge and correct errors and an ability to work alone or in collaboration with others;
- (f) knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts, values, principles and rules of public and private law within an institutional, social, national and global context;
- (g) the capacity to study in-depth and in the relevant contexts, substantive areas of law;
- (h) the ability to conduct self-directed research, including accurate identification of the relevant issue or issues which require researching, retrieval and evaluation of accurate, current and relevant information from a range of appropriate sources, including primary legal sources;

- (i) competency to work with a range of data, including textual, numerical and statistical data;
- (j) the ability to recognise ambiguity and deal with uncertainty in the law;
- (k) the ability to produce a synthesis of relevant doctrinal and policy issues, presentation of a reasoned choice between alternative solutions and critical judgement of the merits of particular arguments;
- (l) the ability to apply knowledge and understanding to offer evidenced conclusions, addressing complex actual or hypothetical problems;
- (m) the ability to communicate both orally and in writing, in relation to legal matters, including an ability to listen and respond to written and oral stimuli, including instructions and questions;
- (n) engagement with their own personal and professional development with academic integrity;
- (o) the ability to apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired in the course of study for research in work involving evolving policy, drafting of laws, the application of laws in contexts such as academia, the legal profession, the judiciary, administration, business or any other law-related vocation; and
- (p) the ability to use the concepts, principles and skills of a lawyer for the benefit of society in any other way.

7. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

With the objective of achieving the aforesaid Benchmark Standards, the Faculty of Law has formulated its teaching, learning and assessment strategies which include the progressive revision of curricula in keeping with social and technological changes and needs. While these strategies require in-depth learning involving a multidimensional approach and may differ from those adopted in other universities and institutions of higher learning, they are unique and best suited for achieving the required benchmark standards. These teaching, learning and assessment strategies have been carefully designed by the Faculty of Law for equipping its students with the essential subject knowledge, skills, attitudes and mindset. Further, teaching and learning activities are arranged to foster progressive and coherent achievement of intended learning outcomes set out in this statement, which are then continually reviewed on a periodic basis.

7.1 LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

The choice of strategies should be inspirational, challenging in nature, foster deep learning and critical thinking in a progressive manner, transforming the students from dependent (teacher-centred) to independent (learner-centred) learners. Therefore, the Faculty encourages the adoption of innovative methods to achieve the overall development of students, i.e., personality development; values enrichment; the sense of social responsibility, justice and wisdom. These goals may be achieved by improving academic preparation, professional exposure and technological familiarity as well. Therefore, diverse methods for delivering instruction and specific evaluation methods to assess intended outcomes are considered a priority in this degree programme.

Accordingly, the Faculty of Law has given consideration to a variety of methods, such as seminars, lectures, workshops, group activities and project-based tasks. Consideration has been given to methods of delivery (physical, virtual or blended), and a balanced combination of teaching and learning methods and other appropriate technique/s that may be used in both classroom and online environments. The following list of teaching strategies is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive. In general, this Benchmark Statement accommodates the recent increase in the use of technology-enhanced teaching. At the Faculty, these methods may take a variety of forms, ranging from specific initiatives to the use of video conferences or app-based survey tools to the general delivery of blended learning activities across the degree programme.

Teaching and Learning Strategies include:

- a) Lectures with audio-visual material
- b) Interactive sessions
- c) Presentations
- d) Community Projects
- e) Problem-based learning
- f) Legal clinics
- g) Action research
- h) Teaching portfolios
- i) Promotion of reflection through learning logs

- j) Micro-teaching (a teaching method in a scaled-down setting with just a few students and for a short period of time, usually 10 or 15 minutes)
- k) Group activities
- l) Debates and Mooting
- m) Independent or collaborative research study
- n) Flip Class Technique
- o) Adversarial teaching method
- p) Cooperative teaching method

In the learning process of students, the Faculty of Law recognises the crucial importance of the active participation of students. Students' active engagement involves critically analysing the knowledge they acquire, testing this knowledge through applying it to scenarios, producing solutions supported by legal arguments, and reflecting on these processes. Therefore, lecturers who apply active learning strategies do so across a broad spectrum of courses and with various techniques. Skills-based courses, such as legal research and writing, as well as doctrinal courses, can be conducive toward teaching by active learning techniques, such as the use of games, collaborative and cooperative projects; in-class critiques of writing, problem-solving, and oral presentation; and simulated workplace-legal problems. The underlying theme of these various approaches is a shift in the model from a teacher-centred to a student-centred approach. The goal of these approaches is to provide an environment that maximises the ability of students to absorb both the doctrine and the skills necessary for legal careers including academia and the practice of law.

The Faculty of Law considers the development of research skills among undergraduates through various strategies as a priority. Mainly continuous assessment components are structured to facilitate different research methods which relate to the study of law. Presently, these assignments are not limited to doctrinal research but include interdisciplinary and empirical aspects as well. In the process of its continuous curriculum revision, it is intended to include a compulsory research component for final year students to evaluate their application, argumentative and analytical skills in the context of different subjects they are exposed to during their undergraduate studies.

7.2 ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

The assessment strategies adopted by the Faculty of Law consist of a range of assessment methods either as closed-book or open-book examinations for making valid judgements about the overall performances and achievements of undergraduates of law, with regard to their knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired, based on the prescribed learning outcomes.

The assessment strategies are both summative and formative, including timed or untimed assessments of various formats. While examinations are traditionally conducted on a physical basis, emergencies such as the Covid-19 scenario necessitated adopting virtual examination systems with online supervision and assessment systems. In the examination process, the Faculty of Law has in practice adopted a dual marking system employing two independent examiners who blindly mark the year-end (semester-end) examination scripts, wherein the average of the marks of the two examiners are considered along with the gradings prescribed in the by-laws of the Bachelor of Laws degree programme. Whenever a discrepancy occurs between the marks of the two examiners, going beyond the accepted differences, the script is given to a third examiner for marking blindly.

Assignments and other forms of continuous assessments are either marked by a single examiner or two examiners based on an agreed policy; if the assignment is a take-home assignment, it is marked by a single examiner as the identity of the student is not revealed to the examiner. However, if it is an oral presentation exposing the identity of the student, two examiners will independently mark the performance of the student.

The continuous assignments conducted by the Faculty of Law includes the following formats but are not limited to: essays and reports of varying length; case notes; statutory interpretation; briefs; annotated bibliographies; critiques of articles; oral/video presentations; moots; skills-based assessments; reflective learning journals; research projects; work/clinic-based assessments; and the creation, use and management of online resources to produce a K-SAM (knowledge, skill, attitude and mindset) model graduate with prescribed graduate attributes. The Faculty of Law maintains a well-balanced alignment between learning, teaching and assessment procedures in order to provide all students with the opportunity to demonstrate they have met the skills and qualities of mindset out in programme learning outcomes as well as subject learning outcomes. Mooting, debating, address to the Jury contests, and role-plays have been integrated into teaching, learning and assessments, and as noted already, Clinical Legal Education is another integral component of the LLB Hons degree programme.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate, reflecting advances in teaching practice and information technology.

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