

Editorial

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Welcome to the winter edition of the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education. The clinical legal education community recently gathered at Monash University Faculty of Law for the IJCLE Conference (19-21 November 2025). Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Monash Law Clinics, this milestone event brought together leading clinicians from Australia and beyond to share expertise on innovation and best practice in clinical legal education. Convened by Dr Jacqueline Weinberg and Professor Jeff Giddings, with support from Northumbria University, the conference provided workshops, panel discussions, and networking opportunities for practitioners and scholars across the discipline. Special thanks are due to Jacqueline and Jeff for their excellent work in convening and organising such a successful and inspiring event.

This edition of the journal reflects the energy and innovation evident at Monash.

First we have Rebecca E. Badejogbin's "Protection of Linguistic Diversity & Access to Justice for All through Pro Bono: Case Study of Nigeria" which examines a fundamental but often overlooked barrier to access to justice: language. Drawing on empirical research across Nigeria's six geopolitical regions, Badejogbin investigates how linguistic diversity affects the delivery of pro bono legal services by the International Federation of Women Lawyers and Nigerian Law School law clinics. In a country with over 400 indigenous languages, the article reveals how communication barriers between service providers and clients undermine efforts to improve access to justice for indigent populations. Badejogbin analyses the constitutional framework governing indigenous language use and documents the practical strategies these organisations have developed to address linguistic challenges. The article makes a compelling case that effectively harnessing indigenous languages in legal service delivery is not merely a matter of accessibility but essential to national development and meaningful justice provision.

The edition also features an article that explores innovative approaches to teaching human rights law through experiential learning. In "From Participation to Practice: Embedding Experiential Human Rights Education Through the Model UN and the UPR Project at BCU," Amna Nazir examines two interlinked initiatives at Birmingham City University that position students as active participants in international legal processes rather than passive observers. The article describes how Model UN simulations are embedded within undergraduate and postgraduate law modules, using a fictional crisis scenario to engage students with the complexities of UN Security Council and Human Rights Council decision-making. Running parallel to this curriculum-based work is BCU's Universal Periodic Review Project, an extracurricular initiative through which students contribute to stakeholder reports submitted to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Drawing on over a decade of reflective teaching practice, the article makes a compelling case for experiential learning as central to human rights legal education, enabling students to develop not only technical legal skills but also diplomacy, ethical judgment, and professional identity. The author addresses the practical challenges

of sustaining such initiatives within resource-constrained institutions and offers recommendations for embedding simulation and student-led research more systematically into legal curricula.

This edition features three "From the Field" contributions that showcase clinical legal education's capacity for innovation across different scales, from targeted community programmes to operational solutions and systemic reform.

Dema Lham, Thuji Wangmo, David W. Tushaus, and Yeshey Dema present "Street Law for Specific Communities: A Project for Persons with Disabilities," documenting an innovative community legal education initiative at Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Bhutan. The authors detail how the Human Dignity Clinic developed a multi-faceted Street Law programme tailored specifically for Persons with Disabilities, moving beyond a written advocacy toolkit to create interactive workshops that addressed the real-world challenges of navigating Bhutan's legal system. The article provides rich practical guidance on curriculum development for diverse audiences, highlighting the importance of Disability Equality Training in preparing law students to design truly inclusive legal education. The authors candidly discuss the challenges encountered, from variations in disability types and degrees to communication barriers and time constraints and the creative solutions developed to ensure both physical and informational accessibility. Survey data from both student facilitators and participants demonstrates the programme's dual impact: law students gained empathy, professional skills, and substantive legal knowledge through experiential learning, while participants reported increased confidence in understanding and engaging with the legal system. The piece offers a replicable model for legal educators seeking to serve vulnerable populations, emphasising the crucial role of community collaboration throughout project design and delivery.

Kim McDonald's "Sustaining Legal Clinics Through Summer: A Strategic Response to Rural Legal Advice Deserts in the Southwest of England" presents a solution to a challenge faced by many university law clinics: maintaining service provision during academic breaks when student availability dramatically declines. McDonald describes how the University of Exeter Community Law Clinic adapted the University of Newcastle, Australia's award-winning "Law on the Beach" initiative to the Devon context, running drop-in legal advice sessions in coastal and urban locations at the start of the summer period. What began as a community outreach initiative evolved into an effective strategy for managing the clinic's waiting list. The piece reflects on both the successes and vulnerabilities exposed by the initiative. While the drop-in sessions demonstrably reduced backlogs and provided timely support to underserved rural and coastal communities in a recognised legal advice desert, they also highlighted the fragility of volunteer-dependent clinic models. McDonald's assessment offers valuable insights for other clinics considering similar approaches.

Eduardo R.C. Capulong and Edgardo Carlo L. Vistan II provide a comprehensive examination of clinical legal education development in the Philippines in "Clinical Legal Education in the Philippines: Towards Institutionalization, Pedagogy, and a Professoriat." The authors trace the evolution of Philippine clinical legal education from its early roots at the University of the Philippines College of Law in 1918 through to the transformative 2019 revision of Rule 138-A, which now mandates clinical training for all law graduates. The article documents how this reform has catalysed the establishment of diverse clinical programmes across the country, from migrant workers' desks to virtual law clinics serving rural communities. Capulong and Vistan argue that mandating clinical education is only the first step. They call for increased credit requirements, bolstered administrative infrastructure, ongoing pedagogical development, and the creation of a dedicated clinical professoriat. Their analysis offers valuable lessons for jurisdictions undertaking similar reforms, emphasising that sustainable clinical legal education requires not just regulatory mandate but institutional commitment, adequate resources, and a community of specialist clinical educators.

Looking ahead, planning is now underway for the next IJCLE Conference, to be held 15-16 June 2026 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom in collaboration with ENCLE and the University of Edinburgh. Under the theme "Invading the Curriculum: Clinical & Experiential Legal Education in an Era of Sustainability and Impact," the conference will explore how clinical methods can move beyond dedicated clinic spaces to transform mainstream legal education. As universities face resource constraints and increasing demands for relevance, the conference will examine how experiential pedagogy can scale sustainably, demonstrate meaningful impact, and embed practice-based learning across the curriculum.

We look forward to welcoming the community to Scotland.