



Published date: 08 July 2026

## Editorial

**Lyndsey Bengtsson**

*Northumbria University, UK*

Welcome to this edition of the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education. Before turning to the contents of the journal, I want to take a moment to reflect on what was a genuinely memorable couple of days in Edinburgh last month.

The IJCLE/ENCLE Conference took place on 15 and 16 June 2026 at Edinburgh Law School, a spectacular venue that provided a fitting backdrop for what turned out to be a rich and stimulating gathering. With over 200 attendees from across the world, the energy in the room was palpable from the outset, and it was wonderful to welcome colleagues- familiar faces and new ones alike from so many different jurisdictions and institutional contexts.

The conference theme, *Invading the Curriculum: Clinical and Experiential Legal Education in an Era of Sustainability and Impact*, set an ambitious agenda, and delegates rose to it. Over the two days, presentations, panels and discussions examined how clinical approaches can transform mainstream legal teaching, enrich student learning and generate meaningful educational and societal impact. At a time when law schools face increasing pressures around relevance, sustainability, and accountability, the conversations felt timely and necessary. Practice-based pedagogy, collaborative partnerships, reflective methods, digital innovation and sustainable models of delivery were all examined, and it was clear that the field continues to evolve in ways that are both principled and practically grounded. I left Edinburgh with my notebook full and my thinking genuinely challenged which, for a two-day conference, is exactly what you hope for. My thanks go to the University of Edinburgh Law School for hosting with such warmth and organisation, to ENCLE who are always a pleasure to collaborate with and to all who attended, presented and contributed.

Turning to this edition of the journal, we open with a reviewed article from Ngozi Maduafor of Nile University of Nigeria, 'The Legal Frameworks for Clinical Legal Education in Nigeria,' which offers a comparative analysis of the legal and institutional frameworks governing CLE in Nigeria and the United States, and makes a compelling case for legislative reform. The author maps the existing Nigerian framework, drawing on constitutional provisions, the Legal Aid Act 2011, the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015, the Child Rights Act, and the Rules of Professional Conduct, before demonstrating that none of these instruments provides a dedicated or enforceable framework for the operation, oversight, and sustainability of law clinics. The contrast with the US position, where all states have student practice rules governing clinical participation and establishes clear standards for law clinics. The article concludes with detailed proposals for amending both the Legal Practitioners Act and the Rules of Professional Conduct to create a dedicated regulatory framework for CLE in Nigeria, including provisions on the establishment of law clinics, student rights of appearance, supervision requirements, and licensing. It is a timely and practically grounded contribution to an area where the gap between aspiration and institutional reality remains significant.

From institutional frameworks we turn to classroom practice, with Kathryn Saban of Lancaster University examining the learning benefits students derive from designing and delivering public legal education to community members, including school pupils, in 'Learning beyond the classroom walls: Assessing the Value of Community Engagement through participation in a Street Law Project.' Drawing on survey data from students enrolled on a Street Law module at Lancaster University Law School, the findings are compelling: students reported significantly enhanced engagement and work ethic when producing work for a real-world audience, alongside substantial skill development in communication, legal research, teamwork, translating legal language for non-lawyers, and employability more broadly. The article situates these findings within the wider literature on community engagement in higher education and Street Law pedagogy, and makes a persuasive case for the educational value of taking students beyond the classroom walls. While the study is small in scale, a limitation the author openly acknowledges, it contributes meaningfully to an emerging evidence base and will resonate with clinicians working across a variety of community-facing programmes.

Biranchi Narayan P. Panda and Gurnoor Gulati of Xavier Law School, XIM University Bhubaneswar, turn attention to the place of mootings within Clinical Legal Education in India, arguing for the introduction of a structured and compulsory mootings programme as an integral element of Indian legal education. Drawing on comparative experience from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, and Canada, the article documents the significant disparities that persist between elite institutions particularly the National Law Universities and the majority of regional and resource-constrained colleges, where meaningful mootings culture remains largely absent. The authors situate mootings within broader debates about experiential learning and consider the contested question of whether mootings should be formally classified as CLE or treated as a complementary stand-alone method. Their analysis concludes that mootings is best understood as a distinctive but complementary strand within CLE, capable of building the research, advocacy, and professional identity formation that live-client work alone cannot deliver. The article proposes a series of reforms including a national mootings framework, curricular integration, faculty development, and financial equalisation measures which together offer a practical roadmap for democratising access to advocacy training across India's highly varied legal education landscape.

This edition also features a From the Field contribution from Sinead Eaton, University of Limerick, which offers a candid and engaging account of a legal technology module delivered at an Irish university. The piece describes a project in which twelve final year law students at the University of Limerick, working in partnership with McCann Fitzgerald LLP and Neota Logic, developed AI-powered applications for Limerick Chamber of Commerce. The apps addressed practical legal and compliance questions in areas including fire safety, business insurance, directors' duties, and company secretarial practice, chosen because they reflected recurring needs among the Chamber's members. What makes the piece particularly valuable for a clinical legal education audience is its honest reflection on pedagogy: the author acknowledges the relative advantages of the company law teams, notes the ethical questions that GenAI raises but which this earlier technology largely sidestepped, and includes a graduate's reflection on the lasting professional value of the experience. The project illustrates how clinical methodology can be productively extended into commercial law settings, equipping students with skills in legal research, client-focused communication, and collaborative problem-solving alongside a working familiarity with the technology increasingly shaping legal practice.

This edition concludes with two book reviews, both by Richard Grimes, Lincoln Law School, UK, Charles University, Czechia and New Vision University, Georgia on recently published texts addressing assessment in legal education. The first, a review of *How to Embed Authenticity in Legal Assessment: Responding to Generative AI* by Veronica Ni Driscoll, Jo Wilson and Jeanette Ashton (Edward Elgar,

2026), welcomes the book's timely focus on authentic assessment in the age of AI. The second review turns to *Rethinking Assessment in Legal Education: Global Perspectives on Innovation, Inclusion and Integrity*, edited by Daniel Bansal, Maribel Canto-Lopez and Jessica Guth (Routledge, 2026), which takes a different structural approach, reproducing six conference papers alongside international commentaries, to examine why and how assessment in law must evolve. Together, the two reviews offer a stimulating comparative read on one of the most pressing questions facing legal educators today, with Richard Grimes noting in both cases that those already working in experiential and clinical settings are, in many respects, already ahead of the curve.

I am delighted to be able to bring you this rich collection of work and look forward to sharing further articles in due course. As always, the journal welcomes submissions, and I encourage colleagues to consider contributing to future editions.