



Cyclical Program Review Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan for the Academic Programs Offered by the Faculty of Law

Programs Reviewed:

Law JD

JD Civil Law/Common Law program with Université de Sherbrooke

Dual JD with Fudan University School of Law, China

Certificate in Law

LLM and PhD

Immigration and Citizenship Law Graduate Diploma (GDipICL)

The Faculty of Law offered a Graduate Diploma in Legal Services Management from 2019 to 2021, since which time admissions have been suspended. The Faculty notified Queen's Senate of its intention to close this program in January 2025. The program was not reviewed due to admissions being suspended.

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation, internal responses, and assessment of the above programs. This report identifies the significant strengths of the programs, and opportunities for program improvement.

An implementation plan is attached that identifies:

- who will be responsible for acting on and monitoring progress on the recommendations,
- any resource or governance implications resulting from the recommendations, and
- timelines for implementation of the recommendations.

[Final Assessment Report: Executive Summary](#)

Summary of Review

- 1) The Faculty of Law produced a self-study document that was reviewed by the Faculty Dean, Vice-Provost and Dean (School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA)), and the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning). The self-study was approved on July 8, 2024.

- 2) The review team visit took place from 8-10 September 2024. The review team members were:
 - i. Dr. Richard Devlin FRSC, Professor, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University
 - ii. Dr. Mariana Mota Prado, Professor, William C. Graham Chair in International Law and Development, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto
 - iii. Dr. Jonathan Rose, Professor and Department Head, Department of Political Studies, Queen's University
- 3) The visit included meetings with:
 - i. Students (undergraduate, GDipICL and other graduate programs)
 - ii. Faculty
 - iii. Staff
 - iv. Librarian
 - v. Director, Indigenous Initiatives and EDI programs
 - vi. Academic and Professional Program Directors
 - vii. Director, Queen's Law Clinics
 - viii. Dean, Faculty
 - ix. Vice-Provost and Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
 - x. Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning
- 4) The review team reported on October 8, 2024. The Faculty Dean and the Vice-Provost and Dean (SGSPA) provided responses to the review team report. The Faculty Dean responded on January 27, 2025, and the Dean, SGSPA on February 19, 2025.
- 5) The Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee considered the review team report, internal responses and a draft Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan at its meeting on June 18, 2025. Dean Colleen Flood attended the meeting. The Report and Plan was finalized and approved at the meeting, with small contextual additions made by the Faculty Dean, in consultation with the Chair, after the meeting.

The following strengths were noted:

- JD and graduate students report being very satisfied with their educational experience. The student body at Queen's Law is enthusiastic, energetic and becoming increasingly diversified.
- Faculty members are highly qualified academics, passionate and talented teachers, ambitious scholars and collegial team-players.
- The administrative and support staff are committed and industrious.
- Faculty members are highly productive, publishing books with top ranked presses and contributing book chapters and articles in internationally recognized peer reviewed journals. They are also becoming increasingly interdisciplinary and international with their work. The scholarly output is impressive both in its quantity and quality and has a positive impact on all the programs offered by Queen's Law.
- Faculty members are very active in the international community. The Faculty has an unusually strong set of international connections for students, including 27 student exchange agreements.

- Queen's Law has actively engaged, and it is anticipated that it will further enhance its relationship with Indigenous communities across Ontario. Queen's Law has recently launched a practicum and course engaging with Indigenous communities in Ontario, through a series of pedagogical innovations.
- Through its five law clinics, Queen's Law has had a very strong connection with the local community and has done an excellent job of serving some of the needs of some marginalized and vulnerable communities.
- The JD program:
 - Has very impressive employment placement statistics for graduates – approximately 95%.
 - Is distinctive because of its strong sense of community and availability of five Law clinics.
 - Includes small group learning for all first-year students.
 - Has evolved assessments to include more formative modes of evaluation; a positive step that responds to the various learning needs of different students.
- The Certificate in Law is an innovation that is opening up legal education and knowledge to a larger number of Canadians.
- The GDip ICL program is a jewel. It is a unique program in English speaking Canada and is providing an excellent education for an important Canadian profession.
- Both the LLM and PhD programs are small and, given the strong support of faculty members, academically rigorous.

The following opportunities for enhancement were noted:

- The plan to introduce a new mandatory first-year course on Indigenous and Aboriginal Law is highly encouraging. More resources will be needed to fully realize the Faculty's plans for Indigenization. Also, most the discourse is focused on "Indigenization" but in other universities and law schools there is also an aspiration for decolonization.
- Ensure that all students in on-campus programs can physically access all educational spaces and all spaces in the Law School.

Summary of Review Team Recommendations

The reviewers made 10 recommendations in the following areas. For a full list of the recommendations, please see the Implementation Plan.

1. Explore a variety of ways to ensure the sustainability of I-EDIAA initiatives.
2. Restructure the first-year JD program to create space for the mandatory Indigenous and Aboriginal Law course.
3. Create specializations within the JD and LLM programs in criminal law, business law, public law, and international law.
4. Create a professional LLM program and restructure the course offerings of the research-based graduate programs (LLM and PhD).
5. Promote more vigorously the dual program with Sherbrooke and collect relevant data.

6. Actively promote and disseminate faculty's and graduate students' publication and research activities within the Queen's Law community and in national and international academic circles.
7. Provide staff members with adequate supports to continue to perform their functions with dedication and enthusiasm.
8. Collaborate with the University to ensure accommodations policies align with the realities of experiential learning in the clinical environment, where there are real constraints.
9. Restructure the CiL curriculum to offer a coherent set of foundational courses and serve as a transitional step into the GDipICL.
10. Make, with approval at the University level, the GDipICL part of the OSAP program.

Status

The academic programs in the Faculty of Law have been approved to continue.

Dates monitoring reports due:	January 2027 and July 2029
Date of next review:	2030-2031 academic year
Prepared by Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)	June 2025
Approved by the Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee	June 18, 2025

Implementation Plan

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
<p>1. Ensure the sustainability of I-EDIAA initiatives, such as special admission streams for Black and Indigenous students. Once admitted, these students need to have a sense of belonging to the institution and have adequate support to succeed while going through the program. This could be achieved by: <i>(see points a - g below)</i></p>	<p>I-EDIAA committee to begin operation.</p>	<p>Committee chair</p>	<p>Committee representatives' time.</p>	<p>Winter term 2025</p>
	<p>New Faculty Board committee to co-ordinate external visitors. Its mandate emphasizes ensuring a diversity of perspectives and representation.</p>	<p>Research & Prizes Committee chair (Associate Dean, Research)</p>		<p>2024-2025 and annually thereafter</p>
	<p>Review curriculum to examine extent of I-EDIAA issues being raised in pervasive manner.</p>	<p>Associate Dean, Graduate and Program Development</p>		<p>Fall 2025</p>
	<p>Work towards fundraising goal to hire new staff member to support mentorship program for first generation, Indigenous and Black students.</p>		<p>Funding application made.</p>	<p>2025-2026 academic year</p>

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
<p>a. Creating an I-EDIAA committee; (short-term)</p> <p>b. Creating events/workshops/speaker series with professionals and scholars of diverse backgrounds; (short-term)</p> <p>c. Emphasizing the importance of diversity in staff hiring, so the students can see themselves represented in the school; (mid-term)</p> <p>d. Increasing the staff for I-EDIAA initiatives, as initially planned; (mid-term)</p> <p>e. Hiring at a minimum one, and for reasons of critical mass preferably more, full-time faculty members who identify as African Canadian/Black or/and who work with race and anti-Black-racism and can help diversify the curriculum and help students see themselves represented in the school (short/mid-term)</p> <p><i>Note: The Faculty will continue to encourage applications from Black, Indigenous, and other equity-deserving scholars for all approved positions and will make every effort to recruit exceptional candidates from underrepresented communities across a range of fields. Due to current hiring restrictions and resource constraints, Faculty hiring must align with Queen's University's strategic research priorities and demonstrate clear curricular need; business cases for each hire must also be approved by the Provost.</i></p> <p>f. To conduct an audit of all courses to determine the extent to which I-EDIAA issues are raised in a pervasive manner in the curriculum, and considering the results, provide student research assistance to help instructors enhance I-EDIAA content and skills. (short-term)</p> <p>g. Considering Queen's Law increasing diversity, consider the adoption of the Boyer Model of Scholarship (or some equivalent) to ensure the appropriate recognition of diverse forms of scholarship. (short term)</p>				
2. Restructure the first-year program, to create space for the mandatory Indigenous and Aboriginal Law course. (short term). <i>(see also points a & b below)</i>	<p>Mandatory Indigenous and Aboriginal Law course to be added to first-year JD program.</p> <p>This addition does not necessarily require semesterization.</p>	Faculty leadership team	An Indigenous faculty member and scholars with expertise in Indigenous and/or Aboriginal law are in place to	2025-2026

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	Semesterization will be considered as part of a larger curriculum review.		undertake this work.	
<p>a. The insertion of this course will require some degree of semesterization of first-year courses, and we would support this reform. Queen's Law is currently exploring options for semesterization and as we do not have specific recommendations on which format this should take.</p> <p>b. This reform should be pursued as soon as permissible within the existing governance structures and required approval processes to allow for the implementation of the mandatory Indigenous law course in the first-year curriculum and other reforms (see Recommendation 3 below).</p>				
3. Create specializations within the JD and LLM programs in criminal law, business law, public law, and international law. (mid-term). <i>(see also points a & b below)</i>	<p>Possibility of creating specializations in the JD program will be considered.</p> <p>Specializations are already being created for the LLM program.</p>	Associate Dean, Graduate and Program Development	Newly created positions enable these changes to be made. Additional funding has been allocated to conduct business case analyses.	Already underway; further planning in 2025-2026 academic year.
<p>a. To be sustainable, these specializations need to be grounded on a solid set of course offerings that will not fluctuate significantly depending on faculty leaves and departures. Clarity about the offerings in the upper-year curriculum depends on the restructuring of the first-year program. Therefore, this change should be only contemplated once the faculty has clarity about the first-year curriculum (see Recommendation 2 above)</p>				

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
b. The creation of these specializations in the LLM program should be combined with the creation of a professional LLM program (see the next recommendation)				
4. Create a professional LLM program and restructure the course offerings of the research-based graduate programs (LLM and PhD). <i>(see also points a - d below)</i>	<p>Continue developing plans to split the existing LLM into separate course-based and research-based degrees, in line with the recommendation.</p> <p>Combine the two required courses into one intensive course offered in Fall term.</p> <p>Consider the advantages and disadvantages of removing the requirement for an oral thesis defence.</p>	Associate Dean, Graduate and Program Development	Newly created positions enable these changes to be made. Additional funding has been allocated to prepare business cases and model implementation.	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Medium-term: 2026-2027 academic year.</p>
a. The professional LLM is more likely to successfully attract students if combined with the specializations mentioned in the previous recommendation. Therefore, although not required, it would be preferable if these reforms could be pursued in tandem (mid-term).				

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<p>b. The research based graduate programs should be restructured to have a robust set of curricular offerings that equip students to conduct high quality legal academic research. The two mandatory courses should be consolidated into one and abbreviated. This reform can be implemented immediately, as it is not dependant on the approval of the creation of the professional LLM program (short-term).</p> <p>c. Research-based graduate programs should include opportunities to acquire soft skills. For example, a workshop to equip students for success in legal academia (grant writing, publishing in peer reviewed journals, applying for academic positions, presenting papers in conferences, etc.). (short-term)</p> <p>d. In the LLM thesis-option, terminate the requirement for an oral thesis defense.</p>				
<p>5. Promote more vigorously the dual program with Sherbrooke and collect relevant data. (short-term)</p>	<p>Renew direct engagement with Sherbrooke administration.</p> <p>Review marketing efforts at both institutions.</p> <p>Engage with French-speaking JD students as potential ambassadors and program applicants.</p> <p>Visit Sherbrooke to promote the</p>	<p>Faculty Dean</p>	<p>Time and money for relationship building and marketing efforts.</p>	<p>2024-2025 and annually thereafter</p>

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
	opportunity with distinguished alumnus.			
6. Actively promote and disseminate faculty's and graduate students' publication and research activities within the Queen's Law community and in national and international academic circles. (short-term). <i>(see also points a & b below)</i>	<p>Develop open-access commons for all faculty research.</p> <p>Develop the graduate programs website to better showcase student research.</p> <p>Support faculty members in university-wide and external research and teaching award competitions.</p> <p>Increase visibility of faculty research through effective communications strategy.</p>	<p>Associate Dean, Research working with Queen's Library.</p> <p>Research and Prizes Committee of Faculty Board.</p> <p>Associate Dean, Research and Research Coordinator, working with Queen's Central Communications.</p>	New and redesigned positions will carry out this work.	Medium-term

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a. Improve the scholarly profile of faculty members by providing financial and administrative support to join open access repositories. (mid-term) b. Nominate individual faculty members, as well as books and papers by faculty and graduate students for national and international prizes (short-term)				
7. Provide staff members with adequate supports to continue to perform their functions with dedication and enthusiasm. <i>(see also points a & b below)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a transparent plan for professional development and communicate it to staff. Ensure staff are aware of the services available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. 	Executive Director, Administration and Finance	Resource implications for any staff professional development that is not offered by Queen's HR.	December 2025 Starting now and ongoing.
a. For those staff members who are interested, there should be more opportunities for continuous professional development. (short-term) b. When the Faculty is in a position to hire an embedded mental health counsellor, their mandate should not only include students, but also staff members who might request support. (mid-term) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Note: Staff support needs are currently met through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which is specifically designed to provide confidential mental health services to employees.</i> 				

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
<p>8. Collaborate with the University Accommodations Office to ensure accommodations policies align with the realities of experiential learning in the clinical environment where there are real constraints.</p>	<p>Consider requiring incoming students to specifically acknowledge the Law Clinics' communications on accommodations.</p> <p>Establish a policy to further the alignment of expectations between the Law Clinics and the University on accommodations, in a manner consistent with other practicums offered by the University.</p> <p>Consult with the University's Experiential Learning Hub on this matter.</p>	<p>Executive Director, Queen's Law Clinics</p>	<p>Staff resources to draft and approve policy.</p>	<p>September 2025</p>

Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Resource or Governance Implications	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
9. Restructure the CiL curriculum to offer a coherent set of foundational courses and serve as a transitional step into the GDipICL.	<p>Consider adding courses in foundational areas such as criminal law, family law and health law. Study demand for these courses.</p> <p>Add more material related to immigration law into two courses.</p> <p>Track numbers of CiL graduates who go on to the GDipICL. Promote CiL as a transitional program.</p>	<p>Associate Dean, Graduate and Program Development.</p> <p>Program Coordinator, Certificate in Law.</p> <p>Work with Law's marketing and communications team.</p>	Resources from Educational Development team.	Starting 2025-2026 and continuing in subsequent years.

The Dean, Faculty of Law shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation plan. The details of progress made will be presented in monitoring reports to the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning), submitted to the Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee for approval and to Senate for information. All monitoring reports will be posted on the university web site.

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

**Approved by the Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee
June 18, 2025**

Final status of academic programs in the

Approved to Continue

Faculty of Law

Date of next program review

2030-2031 Academic Year

Next Steps for Faculty of Law

Monitoring reports to be submitted 18 months and 4 years after receipt of the signed Final Assessment Report: January 2027 and July 2029. The provost's office will remind the Faculty of the deadlines nearer the time, and provide a template for these reports.