

(September 22, 2021)

## Law School Standards



## Introduction

- I. The Law School Standards (hereinafter referred to as the “Standards”) are established by the Japan University Accreditation Association (hereinafter referred to as the “JUAA”) as Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Organization for conducting certified evaluation and accreditation of law schools.

The Law schools subject to these Standards are graduate schools that meet the following requirements.

- (i) The law school has a basic mission of fostering legal professionals who have specialized legal knowledge, the knowledge and skills required for a future career in the legal field and the ability to argue based on legal reasoning, analysis, and logic, as well as a broader education, a rich humanity, and high professional ethics.
  - (ii) The degree to be awarded shall be is Juris Doctor degree.
- II. As a guideline for the university to maintain and improve an appropriate standard of education and research, the JUAA has set and revised various criteria including the “University Standards” which represent the criteria used in the university evaluation conducted by the JUAA.

The Law School Standards are one of the JUAA’s various standards which have their foundation in the “University Standards.”

- III. These Standards consist of the following four major items.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mission and Purpose</li><li>2. Educational Programs and Learning Outcomes / Students</li><li>3. Faculty and Faculty Organization</li><li>4. Law School Management and Improvement</li></ol> |
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- IV. Each major item of these standards is composed of the “text”, “basic requirements,” and “perspectives of evaluation” indicated for each item.

The “text” defines the general aim of the item and describes the elements required to fulfill the basic mission imposed on all law schools, and also to realize the inherent purpose of individual law school.

The “Basic Requirements” and the “Perspectives of Evaluation” indicate the points for law schools to consider in performing self-study and for JUAA in conducting law school evaluations, based on the purpose of the main “text”. More specifically, the “Basic Requirements” cover the legal and other essential requirements that must be reviewed for compliance as a prerequisite to evaluation. (Details of the scope of the basic requirements are outlined separately.) The “Basic Requirements” and the “Perspectives of Evaluation” should be interpreted and applied in the context of the text’s aim, with special attention given to the correlation between the two.

- V. Points identified based on an evaluation of the requirements specified in the text and the

perspectives of evaluation that commendations, distinctive features, or suggestions for improvement will be noted with the following remarks and conditions.

[Recommendation]

- (i) Serious problem that requires improvement with respect to compliance with the laws and regulations governing law schools or the fundamental requirements of law schools.

( Law Schools that receive a recommendation must develop and implement specific corrective action plans to rectify the problem. )

- (i) [Suggestion for Improvement] Issues that do not warrant a recommendation but do require improvement with respect to regal matters related to law schools or the basic matters required of law schools.
- (ii) Opportunities for improvement or further work to strengthen the institution’s unique features in relation to the school-specific goals and objectives.

( Institutions that receive a suggestion for improvement should develop and implement specific action plans and strive for improvement. )

- (i) [Commendation] Effective or sufficiently successful efforts in realizing the institution’s basic mission with respect to the fundamental requirements of law schools.
- (ii) Effective or sufficiently successful efforts in realizing the institution’s established goals and objectives or in strengthening the institution’s unique features with respect to the school-specific goals and objectives.

[Distinctive Feature]

- (i) Efforts that do not warrant a commendation but are considered promising or original and in line with the institution’s established goals and objectives.

Items	Fundamental requirements of law schools	Laws and regulations governing law schools	School-specific goals and objectives
Evaluation remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commendation</li> <li>• Recommendation</li> <li>• Suggestion for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation</li> <li>• Suggestion for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commendation</li> <li>• Distinctive feature</li> <li>• Suggestion for improvement</li> </ul>

VI. Compliance with these Standards is determined based on the overall evaluation of the items and areas recommended for improvement. The institutions found to have a serious problem(s) as a law school will be deemed non-compliant.

VII. Relevant laws and regulations are abbreviated as follows:

Explanatory notes

[SEA]	: School Education Act
[Coordination Laws]	: Act on Coordination between Education at Graduate Schools of Law and the Bar Examination and Related Acts
[MOESEA]	: Ministerial Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture No. 11 of 1947)
[SEU]	: Standards for Establishment of Universities (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture No. 28 of 1956)
[SEGS]	: Standards for Establishment of Graduate Schools (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture No. 28 of 1974)
[SEPGS]	: Standards for Establishment of Professional Graduate Schools (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology No. 16 of 2003)
[Notification No. 53]	: Items Prescribing Necessary Matters Concerning Professional Graduate Schools (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology Notification No. 53 of 2003)
[MEXT Notifications]	: Notifications and announcements from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology to law schools and certified evaluation and accreditation organizations of law schools

# Law School Standards

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## 1. Mission and Purpose

The purpose of the law school system is to foster legal professionals possessing specialist knowledge of the law, knowledge and skills required for a future career in the legal field and the ability to apply that knowledge and skills, basic competence required in legal practice, as well as a broader education, rich humanity, and a high level of professional ethics. Law schools have the critical mission of building a human resource base for the legal sector to meet the needs of 21st century society.

It is important that law schools train and develop human resources by putting in place the frameworks and systems necessary for conducting education and research activities in line with the above-stated mission and purpose and with their own particular mission, purpose, and educational objectives. The mission, purpose, and educational objectives should be established in the law school’s regulations and communicated to all members of the institution, including faculty and students.

### *Basic Requirements*

Of the basic requirements related to this category, the items necessary to indicate in the basic requirement data must meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations.

### *Perspectives of Evaluation*

Criteria	Perspectives of Evaluation	
Setting of purpose	1-1	The law school has established its own mission and purpose in line with the purpose of the law school system and the mission and purpose of the university. (SEGS Article 1-2)
	1-2	The law school’s own goals and objectives are communicated to all members of the institution, including faculty and students.

## 2. Educational Programs and Learning Outcomes / Students

It is important for law schools to design and manage their educational programs in line with the

purpose of the law school system and with the aim of achieving their own mission, purpose, and educational objectives. To this end, law schools must develop and communicate to students (a) a degree award policy (diploma policy) that states expected learning outcomes consistent with the inherent purpose, (b) a curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) compatible with the diploma policy, and (c) a student enrollment policy (admissions policy) that describes the personal qualities and attributes of the students the institution seeks to admit as well as the criteria and methods used to set admission standards.

Law schools should systematically design a curriculum that complies with applicable laws and regulations, consists of subjects that are in line with the curriculum policy, and that takes external opinions into consideration. It is also important for law schools to provide theoretical and practical education appropriately, in order to foster legal professionals possessed with specialized legal knowledge, the knowledge and skills required for a future career in the legal field and the ability to argue based on legal reasoning, analysis, and logic, as well as a broader education, a rich humanity, and high professional ethics.

In the educational methods of law schools, in order to bridge theory and practice as well as to enhance practical education, it is necessary to incorporate practical educational methods for training legal professionals, such as interactive and multidirectional discussions and question-and-answer sessions, in addition to lectures, and to effectively support the cultivation of qualities and abilities in accordance with the course format of individual classes.

To this end, law schools must conduct classes with an appropriate number of students, taking into account the methods of teaching, facilities, equipment, and other educational conditions to fully realize the educational method. It is also required to realize smooth learning for students through the preparation and utilization of syllabus, course guidance, and consultation and support for preparation and review, etc.

Understanding the abilities and qualities acquired by students upon completion of the program is crucial for law schools to assess the effectiveness of educational outcomes, inspect its appropriateness, and improve and enhance it. In doing so, law schools should use methods and criteria appropriate to measure the achievement of goals for each course to evaluate student learning. Given law schools' mission to foster capable professionals who can contribute to building a better society, it is equally important to track the career path status of program graduates.

In the selection of new enrollees, law schools must conduct appropriate and fair selection based on a admission policy in order to provide appropriate and effective education. Law schools should also carefully monitor student quota management to ensure an optimal educational environment and to maintain learning effectiveness. Furthermore, law schools are expected to design and implement student support programs responsive to the needs of a diverse range of students to help maximize student learning.

#### *Basic Requirements*

Of the basic requirements related to this category, the items necessary to indicate in the basic requirement data must meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations.

Perspectives of Evaluation

Criteria	Perspectives of Evaluation	
Diploma policy and curriculum policy	2-1	<p>In line with the purpose of the law school system, the law school has established a degree award policy (diploma policy) that states the skills and abilities its students are expected to acquire (learning outcomes); a curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) that specifies the program content and teaching methods; and admission policy)that describes the personal qualities and attributes of the students the institution seeks to admit as well as the criteria and methods used to set admission standards. The three policies are compatible with one another, with the diploma policy forming the basis of the other two, and clearly demonstrate the direction of the school’s education (MOESEA Article 165-2).</p>
Curriculum design and courses	2-2	<p>Curriculums are designed to ensure coherent and sequential learning with considerations given to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Appropriate categorization of courses (e.g. compulsory, required elective, optional).</li> <li>(2) Balanced course offering covering such subject areas as basic law, basic legal practice, basic jurisprudence and adjacent areas, and applied and advanced subjects (SEPGS Article 20-3).</li> <li>(3) Strategies to ensure that student course selection is not skewed towards a particular subject area among basic law, basic legal practice, basic jurisprudence and adjacent areas, and applied and advanced subjects (SEPGS Article 20-3,).</li> <li>(4) Strategies to ensure cohesiveness of the theoretical and practical aspects of legal education in curriculum design, course content, and registration procedures.</li> <li>(5) Curriculum design addressing the needs of students wishing to earn the qualification to take the bar examination while in law school (MEXT Notification).</li> </ol>
	2-3	<p>Classes using various instruction models in terms of time and space (e.g. remote or e-learning formats) feature appropriate teaching content and methods to achieve educational effectiveness (SEGS Article 8 Paragraph 2 and Article 9).</p>
	2-4	<p>Classes are offered with hours and schedules suitable to student</p>

		needs and convenience.
Courses designed to develop the skills required in legal practice	2-5	Legal clinics and externship opportunities are offered in line with the confidentiality policy established in the institution's regulations that meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations, with appropriate student guidance being provided on this policy. The legal clinics and externship programs feature content suitable for clinical practice training and are conducted within a clear framework of responsibility.
Teaching	2-6	Courses incorporate practical instruction methods aimed at preparing legal professionals, such as interactive and multi-directional discussions and question and answer sessions effective for achieving the expected student learning outcomes (SEPGS Article 8).
	2-7	Courses properly incorporate instruction methods designed to develop the skills to apply specialized knowledge required for all aspiring legal professionals (i.e. the ability to argue based on legal reasoning, analysis, and logic), along with the skills to apply other specialized knowledge (Coordination Laws Article 4 Paragraphs 2 and 3, SEPGS Article 20- 5). Courses using such instruction methods are consistent with the mission of the law school system and do not place excessive focus on bar examination preparations.
	2-8	Mutually reinforcing tools and services, such as those listed below, are offered to help effective student learning.  (1) Development and use of a syllabus that considers the basic competence required in legal professionals (SEPGS Article 10, Paragraph 1).  (2) Effective learning support programs, such as academic counseling responsive to the needs of students both with and without previous legal studies experience and a school-wide office hour program.
	2-9	The law school has classrooms and other facilities needed to deliver its education programs, and maintains an appropriate venue capacity with the following considerations in mind (SEPGS Article 17, SEGS Article 19):  (1) Enrollment capacity per class per course is set low to ensure effective student learning (SEPGS Article 20-4, Paragraph 1).



		<p>(2) Class enrollment capacity for basic law subjects is set in line with the legal capacity limit of 50 students (SEPGS Article 20-4 Paragraph 2).</p> <p>(3) Enrollment capacity for courses requiring individual instruction (e.g. legal clinics and externships) is set at a level appropriate for such type of instruction.</p>
Learning outcomes	2-10	The criteria and processes used to assess academic achievement, award credits, and determine satisfactory completion of the education programs are established, communicated to students, and followed in a fair and rigorous manner (SEPGS Article 10 Paragraph 2). Any follow-up or make-up examinations are administered in accordance with objective and rigorous standards set and announced in advance, and are graded in a fair and consistent manner in accordance with the assessment criteria and methods announced to students in advance.
	2-11	Policies are in place that restrict students from advancing to the next level when they fail to obtain the required number of credits at the end of their first year or perform poorly on the Common Achievement Test for Law Schools.
	2-12	With the aim of ensuring fairness and consistency of grading, processes are in place for students to inquire about their grades. Such processes are communicated to students and implemented properly.
	2-13	The law school is making systematic efforts to improve curriculums and teaching methods (e.g. FD activities) by seeking student and alumni feedback, gathering and analyzing data on bar examination success rates, the standard number of years to complete a degree and the percentage of completion as well as the opinions of students and alumni, and assessing these data against the expected learning outcomes described in the diploma policy and using the results for improvement (SEPGS Article 11, SEGS Article 14-3).
Student admissions	2-14	Students are admitted in an appropriate and fair manner based on the selection criteria and procedures adopted and publicly announced in advance and in accordance with admission policy. Law schools offering different types of entrance examination options provide clear descriptions of the positioning of each option and how they relate to one another (SEPGS Article 20, Coordination Laws

		Article 2).
	2-15	Student intake and student body size are managed and maintained at an appropriate level in accordance with the admission capacity and enrollment capacity, respectively (SEGS Article 10). Policies and systems are in place to ensure the student body size does not far exceed or fall below the enrollment capacity, and in the event that it does, appropriate actions are taken to rectify the problem.
Ensuring student diversity	2-16	Screening methods, schedules, and other matters pertaining to the admissions process are designed to produce a student body with a range of experience (Coordination Laws Articles 2 and 10; SEPGS Article 19).
Assessment and evaluation of applicants' aptitude and skills	2-17	Admission offers are extended to applicants determined to be suitably qualified based on an objective and effective assessment of their aptitude and skills (SEPGS Article 20). Applicants without previous legal study experience are evaluated in accordance with the Guideline for Law Schools on Admission of Applicants without Prior Legal Education.
	2-18	The qualification of a "student with prior legal education" is assessed in a fair manner using appropriate assessment criteria and methods that include an essay format examination. The assessment criteria are announced in advance using appropriate means (SEPGS Article 25).
Student support	2-19	Learning support programs catering to the needs of a diverse body of students, including working adults, exchange students, and students with disabilities, are provided.
	2-20	The following resources and programs are provided to support effective student learning.  (1) Support staff such as academic advisors and teaching assistants who offer academic advice and support on pre- and after-class studying and other matters.  (2) Extracurricular learning support that is in line with the purpose of the law school system and not excessively focused on bar examination preparations.
	2-21	Poor academic performance (e.g. failure to meet the requirements to progress to the next level), absenteeism, and dropouts are

		monitored, their causes investigated and analyzed, and appropriate intervention provided.
	2-22	Spaces where students can study independently are provided to help enhance learning effectiveness.
	2-23	The library is equipped with a sufficient and adequate level of books and other resources that meet learning and education activity needs, and operated with environmental conditions and hours of service suitable to support learning and education activities (SEGS Article 21).
	2-24	Sufficient and adequate facilities, including information infrastructure, that meet learning and education activity needs are available and used effectively.
	2-25	Effective programs are in place to provide career counseling and guidance and to track graduates' career paths.

### 3. Faculty and Faculty Organization

Law schools should maintain a sufficient and adequate number of full-time faculty members to meet their education and research needs in order to fulfill their mission as a law school and achieve their established goals and objectives. Teaching staff qualifications should be determined with consideration that law schools aim to train legal professionals possessed with specialist knowledge of the law, knowledge and skills required for a future career in the legal field and the ability to apply that knowledge and skills, basic competence required in legal practice, the ability to argue based on legal reasoning, analysis, and logic, as well as a well-rounded education, strong human values, a high level of professional ethics, and the skills to put theory into practice.

A law school's faculty organization should consist of teachers with superior research achievements and practical experience as well as strong teaching skills, with a balanced mix of teachers who teach theoretical concepts and those who focus on the practical side of legal education. Faculty organizations should be capable of sustaining and improving the law school's education and research activities. Moreover, diversity must be given consideration in teaching staff selection.

To ensure the quality of education and research activities is maintained into the future, law schools must ensure that faculty members with superior research achievements and practical experience are appropriately assigned. To that end, it is essential that recruitment, appointment, dismissal, and promotion of teachers are conducted fairly in accordance with the prescribed procedures and methods. Law schools should also facilitate professional development of its teaching staff and work to promote mutual understanding and cooperation between faculty who teach theory-based courses and teachers who teach practice-based courses. Since the responsibilities of the full-time faculty include not only instructing courses but also management and other administrative duties,

law schools should clearly assign their roles and responsibilities and evaluate teacher activities in an appropriate manner.

Law schools should create and maintain optimal education and research conditions and environments for their full-time faculty to ensure quality teaching and research and promote academic creativity.

*Basic Requirements*

Of the basic requirements related to this category, the items necessary to indicate in the basic requirement data must meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations.

*Perspectives of Evaluation*

Criteria	Perspectives of Evaluation	
Policy on faculty organization structure	3-1	A policy on the faculty organization structure is in place to provide an overall blueprint of the faculty organization required to implement the law school's education and research activities.
Composition of full-time faculty	3-2	The composition of the full-time faculty takes gender balance and other diversity considerations into account.
Recruitment, appointment, dismissal, and promotion of faculty	3-3	Appropriate criteria and methods are established and implemented for faculty recruitment, appointment, dismissal, and promotion.
Professional development of teaching staff	3-4	Systematic teacher training is provided, such as school-wide professional development programs and training programs targeting newly appointed teachers designed to improve teaching skills and to foster a better understanding of the professional competencies required of university teaching staff.
	3-5	Procedures are in place to properly evaluate the full-time faculty's education and research activities, organization management, and social engagement and contribution.
Teaching and research conditions,	3-6	The law school provides appropriate teaching and research conditions (e.g. reasonable class schedules, guaranteed research time, and

work environment, and staffing		provision of research funding), work environment (e.g. provision of laboratories), and staff support (e.g. TAs) (SEGS Article 22-3).
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#### 4. Law School Management and Improvement

Law schools should ensure proper management, pursue continuous improvement, and promote education and research activities in a steady and progressive manner. As part of this process, it is important that law schools clearly define the roles and responsibilities associated with the planning and design of education in order to facilitate independent decision-making and implementation. Law schools should also regularly and systematically perform self-study to promote constant improvement of their education and research activities.

In order to identify the challenges and needs of society and help build a better world by delivering value, law schools need to engage with outside communities and use that relationship to improve their own institutions. It is also crucial that law schools follow appropriate information disclosure practices and fulfill accountability to promote a greater understanding of their education and research activities in society.

##### *Basic Requirements*

Of the basic requirements related to this category, the items necessary to indicate in the basic requirement data must meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations.

##### *Perspectives of Evaluation*

Criteria	Perspectives of Evaluation	
Law school management	4-1	An organizational structure to effectively manage the law school is established and in operation.
	4-2	The roles and responsibilities associated with the planning and implementation of teaching and other activities are clearly defined.
	4-3	Partnerships with undergraduate law departments seeking to put in place Coordinated Introductory Law Programs are carried out in accordance with an appropriate Jurist Training Coordination Agreement (Coordination Laws Article 6).
Self-study and improvement activities	4-4	Self-study is conducted in a systematic and ongoing manner in accordance with a prescribed self-study procedure and under a system where responsibility is clearly assigned. The self-study results are being used for the improvement of teaching and research (SEA Article 109 Paragraph 1, MOESEA Articles 158 and 166).

	4-5	Areas of improvement identified by a certified evaluation and accreditation agency are being addressed.
Community engagement and information disclosure	4-6	Input from Collaboration Council for Educational Program is reflected in the education programs to ensure that outside opinions are used to inform and improve teaching and school management (SEPGS Article 6-2).
	4-7	Accountability is demonstrated by putting in place information disclosure policies and systems and releasing information on the law school's management and activities, including self-study results and the law school evaluation results (Coordination Laws Article 5, SEPGS Article 20-7).