



# Quality Assurance Cyclical Undergraduate Program Review – Executive Summary and Implementation Plan

Bora Laskin Faculty of Law

April 22, 2025

## **Programs Reviewed**

Juris Doctor (JD)

## **Executive Summary**

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and the Ontario Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law submitted a self-study (October 2021). Volume I presented the undergraduate program descriptions and outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, and program information along with institutional information and statistical data. Volume II provided course syllabi. Volume III provided the CVs for core faculty contributing to the delivery of the programs.

The Review Team for this cyclical program review included two external reviewers and one internal reviewer selected by the Senate Academic Quality Assurance Sub-Committee (SAC-QA) from a set of proposed reviewers. The reviewers examined materials and completed a two-day site visit on November 15 – 17, 2021. The site visit included meetings with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Deputy Provost and Vice Provost (Teaching and Learning), Dean of Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, the Operations Advisor, the Director of Students, the Student Services Advisor, the Director of Indigenous Relations, the University Librarian and Liaison Librarian, full-time, tenure-track faculty members, a group of current students, and a group of alumni and community partners. The Review Team was provided with a video tour of the Thunder Bay campus including specific spaces related to the program, for example, classrooms and research-related facilities.

In their report (December 2021), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the programs delivered by the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law meet the Quality Assurance Framework evaluation criteria and align with the University mission, strategic plan and academic plan. The Review Team noted that the programs are of high quality and offer students a regionally connected and learner-centred experience supported by the full-time faculty members.

Students must meet the standard University admission policies which are appropriate for the Program Learning Outcomes. Curriculum structure and delivery, and teaching and assessment methods are appropriate, are aligned with comparable programs across Canada, reflect the current state of the discipline, and are effective in preparing graduates to meet defined program outcomes and the University's Degree Level Expectations.

The Review Team noted several strengths of the Juris Doctor program and summarized them as follows:

- In collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners, the BLFL pioneered a new way of teaching law in Canada. It hasn't happened without growing pains, but we cannot conclude this report without readily acknowledging the incredible effort that's been given by all involved. By declaring and taking its mandate seriously, BLFL is at the forefront of legal education in Canada. It offers unique education opportunities to law students. Many law schools across Canada can see what BLFL has done - on Indigenous Law and an integrated practice curriculum in particular- and a road that was once lonely is getting a bit more crowded. Nonetheless the Faculty's continued leadership in these fields is to be commended. We would be remiss if we did not also highlight the sense of community we encountered. "I am a person not a number" was a regular theme. Faculty, staff and students reported that they loved the close bonds that can be developed within the program, and this creates a strong shared experience and learning community. Furthermore, students, alumni and placement supervisors consistently reported that BLFL students were well prepared for the practice of law vis à vis peers at other Canadian law schools.

Responses to the Review Team were received from the Dean of the Faculty of Law (Mahy 2022).

A Final Assessment Report (FAR) has been prepared to provide a synthesis of the external evaluation and internal response to the recommendations. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

### **Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan included below identifies the academic unit's plans to action the recommendations, those responsible for ensuring their implementation and the timelines.

### Implementation Plan (Part A): Program Responsibilities

Implementation of the Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Undertake a strategic planning process to address curriculum, enrolment, faculty and staff complements (with a prioritization on Indigenous hires), space (addresses Recommendations 1, 2, 6).		Manager, SISE, Operations Advisor, Dean, Faculty Council	Winter, Spring, 2023
External Promotion of BLFL (addresses Recommendation 1).	Working with Media Relations	Manager, SISE	2022-23
Appointment of an Assistant Dean (addresses Recommendation 2,5,7)		In accordance with the provisions of the LUFA Collective Agreement	2023-24
Alumni Engagement activities (addresses Recommendation 4)	Working with Office of External Relations	Manager, SISE	2022-23, ongoing.
Development of an onboarding process and mentorship program for new faculty (addresses Recommendation 5,7)		Dean, OAM, Faculty Council, Assistant Dean (when appointed)	2022-23-24
Cultural Competency training (addresses Recommendation 5)	Working with the President's Council on Truth and Reconciliation	As above, OAM engagement.	2022-23-24
Continued review and support of IPC (addresses Recommendation 7)		Director, Student Services and Skills	2022-23, ongoing, nearing completion
Continued review and support of the practicum placement (addresses Recommendation 8)		Director, Student Services and Skills	2022-23, ongoing, nearing completion

Continued review and support to address issues of accommodations and essential requirements (addresses Recommendation 9)	Working with SAS	Dean, Director, Student Services and Skills, Faculty Council	2023-24-25
Space analysis and IT review (addresses Recommendations 1 and 10)		Dean, Operations Advisor	2022-23, ongoing
Develop and maintain records of admissions related to different categories of students (addresses Recommendation 11)	Working with IPA	Manager, SISE	2022-23, ongoing
Develop and maintain records of graduates (addresses Recommendation 12)		Manager, SISE	2022-23, ongoing

### Implementation Plan (Part B): Decanal & Administration Responsibilities

Implementation of the Recommendations	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
<b>Meet regularly with program to monitor progress on the Implementation Plan**</b>	Report to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) as part of the Annual Review process	Dean of Faculty of Law	Annually

\*indicates individual or office with responsibility

\*\*Note - The Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The details of progress made will be presented in the Deans' Annual Reports and filed in the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic).