

Call for Papers for a Special issue of *The Law Teacher* (volume 61, 2027) on ‘Teaching Law in Action: Innovation and Reflexivity in Legal Education’

Guest editors Nina Holvast and Siobhán Airey

Contemporary legal education is increasingly shaped by several dynamics within and outside of the university, challenging law schools to evolve pedagogies that foreground law’s social function and institutional limits. Increasingly, law schools recognize the importance of not just educating students in legal doctrinal knowledge, skills and methods but also exposing them to the realities of how law operates in practice. As such, the concept of ‘law in action’ has gained prominence in academic legal education. This special issue explores how legal educators and law schools are responding to this shift through innovative and reflexive teaching practices, and wider institutional responses.

Teaching law in action takes many forms: a module within a course, a ‘guiding sensibility’ woven through substantive subjects such as property, contract, or constitutional law, or a standalone pedagogy like clinics and legal studies courses. These approaches open new horizons for pedagogical and substantive innovation, changing how we teach and what we teach about law. They can encourage students to engage reflexively with the nature and social role of law in society while prompting teachers to reconsider the purpose and responsibilities of academic legal education today.

The law school context is also significant here. How have law schools as institutions responded to this evolving dimension of contemporary legal education? Do teaching innovations in this field remain within pre-identified course offerings? Might certain legal education topics more ‘amenable’ to ‘law in action’ education, and why? What kinds of institutional recognition and resources might be helpful to develop and teach ‘law in action’ well?

Approach of the issue

For this special issue we invite academics from diverse disciplines to submit contributions that describe, analyse and reflect on either or both the pedagogical innovation and reflexive dimensions to the teaching of ‘law in action’ in academic legal education, and the academic institutional dimensions of teaching ‘law in action.’ More specifically, we welcome submissions that do one or more of the following:

- Describe and assess innovative teaching designs, activities, assessments, or curricula that bring law in action into the classroom or clinic.
- Analyse how specific pedagogical interventions shape student understanding of legal practice, professional identity, or social responsibility.
- Reflect critically on inclusion, access, participation, or power dynamics in law-in-action teaching.
- Offer comparative perspectives, empirical studies, case studies, or practitioner-scholar reflections that connect classroom practice to broader socio-legal consequences.
- Theorise the aims of academic legal education in light of experiential, clinical,

interdisciplinary, or community-engaged approaches.

- Reflect on academic legal education institutional approaches, policies and practices to 'law in action' pedagogy that may foster (or limit) a contextual 'law in action' approach to the teaching of law
- Discuss deeper purpose and role of academic legal education in light of contemporary political, economic, and societal challenges and law's role and engagement therein.

We invite you to contribute to the special issue by **submitting an abstract** (up to 250 words) by **17th June 2026** to both Nina Holvast (holvast@law.eur.nl) and Siobhán Airey (airey@law.eur.nl). Submitted abstracts will be reviewed, and selected contributors will be invited to develop their papers for inclusion in the issue. Notification of acceptance will be shared by end June 2026. Please see details below for full schedule.

Early-career researchers and scholars from under-represented backgrounds are especially encouraged to submit.

About The Law Teacher

The Law Teacher is a fully-refereed journal concerned with the teaching of law and issues affecting legal education at all academic levels. Whilst it is the journal of the UK-based Association of Law Teachers, both the Association and the journal are international in outlook and contributions from any jurisdiction are welcome in any section of the journal.

Contributions generally address issues of legal education rather than substantive law as such. What falls within the concept of 'legal education' is broadly interpreted, and could include any issues which will be of interest to law teachers. The journal is particularly interested in reporting pedagogical developments, properly grounded in theory and effectively researched and analysed, and the results of empirical research into matters of concern to law teachers. The Law Teacher is read by academics and teachers of law around the world, and members of the Association of Law Teachers receive copies as part of their membership. For more info see: [The Law Teacher | Taylor & Francis Online](#).

Practical details and planning

Articles should be between 8,000 and 10,000 words in length. Though the special issue is planned for publication in the latter end of 2027, once papers have passed the peer review process, they will be available online. The deadline for submitting manuscripts is end September 2026. We aim to hold an authors' meeting and internal peer review workshop in **mid-November 2026**, where contributors will present and discuss the first drafts of their papers with submission of final papers in mid-February 2027.

Timeline

Stage	Date / Period
Circulation of Call for Papers	April 2025
Abstract submission deadline	17th June 2026
Notification of acceptance	30th June 2026
Submission of paper	End September 2026
Peer review workshop	Mid-November 2026
Submission of final paper	Mid-February 2027