

Nurturing legal skills and standards for professional practice: Revamping the role of law schools through technology-oriented curriculum reforms

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Abstract

Law school curriculum is conventionally aligned to the calls of the legal profession, albeit more in knowledge development than in vocational training. However, with the advent of artificial intelligence (AI), new opportunities are emerging for law schools to reposition their roles. The paper aims to determine how the skills and standards warranted by the legal profession could be met by law schools harnessing AI technology. After identifying relevant professional skill sets and licensing standards, the paper assesses the scope of contemporary AI applications in legal practice. The paper argues the feasibility for AI training in legal education curricula with reference to the response in selective law schools and some emerging jurisprudence on professional AI usage, emphasizing the need to take due cognizance of relevant caveats in designing AI curriculum. The paper calls for a more cohesive action to adapt AI technology training for law students in serving the legal profession.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; legal profession; language; legal education; curriculum reforms

1. Introduction

The pathways to prepare for the legal profession typically consist of tertiary education in law schools, primarily focused on acquisition of legal knowledge, followed by a vocational training aimed at gaining skill sets essential for practicing the profession. Despite such a demarcation, legal skills training still takes place in law schools, albeit in a limited way. The limitations of law school in providing a full scale of skills training could be attributed to constraints in resources and time in providing the necessary training matching the expectations and needs of the licensing bodies. With the advent of AI, and its immense potential in producing the outcomes that are conventionally achieved through individual skill sets acquisition, new opportunities have emerged for law schools to step into the forefront of AI adoption and training through curriculum and pedagogical reforms.

AI technology being a common enabler of producing a range of desired outcome, resources required for training law students to be capable of using and tapping into the full potential of AI technology should be much lower than undertaking diverse legal skill sets training for every individual. Beyond this feasibility, AI is emerging as an inevitable technology for tertiary education due to several reasons like the obvious advantages AI offers as a teaching, learning and assessment tool, as well as the fundamental expectation of the employers that all graduating students be AI literate. In the light of these opportunities and expectations, the paper calls for a transformative role of law schools in providing essential AI training to not only tap into the pedagogical potential AI offers but also its capacity in producing vibrant law graduates to meet the demands of the legal profession.

The fundamental premise of the paper, calling upon the law schools to consolidate its cultivation of professional legal skills through curriculum and pedagogical reforms embedding AI reverberates a strategic approach that is aligned with the specific skills and standards required by professional licensing bodies. The paper argues that the law schools are in the best position to assess various AI applications, both generic and legal AI, to determine their potential to meet the specific professional skills and standards practicing lawyers should possess. Moreover, the paper also contends that the law schools are also well positioned to take due cognizance of the risks and challenges arising from usage of AI in the legal practice and adopt measures and training methods to prevent relevant pitfalls and yet tap into the fullest potential AI offers. With the objective of exploring relevant strategic roles the law schools could play, the first part of the paper identifies the fundamental attributes of legal professionals as expected by licensing bodies. Given the significance of legal language related skills in the practice of law, the paper first identifies a range of specific skills and standards under the category of 'language and communication' prescribed by the professional bodies governing barristers and solicitors in the UK.

In addition, the paper examines skill sets under the category of 'legal research, analytical and other practice standards' prescribed by the professional bodies in the UK, as AI applications are capable of catering to these typical skills. The paper proposes that instead of a general assessment of AI tools to determine their utility for the legal profession, law schools should carry out a much deeper review with reference to the two categories of the professional standards identified in the paper as specific benchmarks. The next part of the paper traces the emerging AI applications and its growing adoption in the Legal Profession. This part reviews some of the

systematic international studies tracing the scope of AI adoption by the legal profession in key jurisdictions, where AI engagement in legal practice is well pronounced. This part also identifies specific legal AI applications that are increasingly utilized by attorneys and law firms. Identifying the capabilities of these specific technologies and benchmarking them against the professional skills and standards should allow law schools to determine the suitability of individual AI applications for inclusion in their AI training curriculum.

The next part of the paper, focused on AI in law school curriculum and pedagogy, addresses a potential concern of how the conventional limitations of law school in providing the full array of skills training can be overcome by law schools in undertaking an AI mandate. The paper distinguishes the above two scenarios to argue the feasibility, desirability and inevitability of the AI embedded curriculum reforms in the law schools. The paper identifies specific law school curriculum with AI focused learning outcomes, providing references for case studies on some of pioneering efforts of law schools. The following part of the paper reviews certain caveats and emerging regulatory standards on the use of AI in the legal profession. Analyzing some of the identified risks of use of AI in the legal profession, including those manifesting from certain judicial pronouncements, the paper alludes to some specific regulations governing AI use in legal practice to argue for the need of the law schools to take due cognizance of those risks and regulatory standards while undertaking AI based curricular reforms. The concluding part examines the major findings and makes relevant recommendations calling upon law schools to reinvigorate their role in equipping its graduates with essential legal AI skills that can serve fundamental skill sets and standards of the legal profession.

2. Attributes Fundamental to the Legal Profession

Among several traits legal professionals are expected to possess, language is by far considered to be the most important quality for every lawyer. While the paramount significance of language has been categorically emphasized by professional bodies like the American Bar Association in all its four iterations namely reading, speaking, writing and listening, it identifies the importance of a specific set of skills, values and knowledge that goes beyond language (ABA, 2026). They include dexterities in problem solving, ability to write and read critically, listening and grasping, communication and mooted skills, legal research and up to date knowledge, organization and management, relationship building and collaborative skills, promoting justice and public service. It is evident from the above that the relevant skill sets are quite diverse and consequently law schools often do not have sufficient resources or time frame to provide sufficient in-depth training in all those attributes. Therefore, law schools conventionally tend to focus on inculcation of core legal knowledge and basic legal skills and leave the mastery of the various professional skills for subsequent stages like pupillage required for licensing or even to the very professional practice stretching over the years.

The limitations of law school in this regard seems to be widely recognized, including by the professional licensing bodies that seek to fill the void through specific prescription of strengthening the attributes through pupillage and professional development programs that are outside the scope of law school orientation. For example, the Bar Standards Board (BSB) of the United Kingdom

(UK) that regulates barristers seeks the development through various pupillage and work-based learning components. While prescribing the qualifications to become a fully qualified barrister and ultimately obtaining a full practicing certificate, the UK BSB mandates legal training involving four distinct components namely academic legal training, vocational legal training, qualifying sessions training in one of the Inns of Court (professional societies) and Pupillage (BSB Handbook, 2026, Rule Q3-Q5).

In addition to the conventional pupillage, the BSB also recognizes ‘work-based learning’ that could be offered by prospective employers for future employees to satisfy the ‘pupillage requirement’. It is relevant to note that the pupillage requirement involves two distinct stages consisting of a non-practicing period and a practicing period. The BSB prescribes a clear set of knowledge, skills and other attributes expected out of the work during pupillage, which includes distinct language-based components (BSB, 2016). The relevant standards and competences in this regard are not only directed at those intending to enter the legal profession but also equally to those providing legal education and training. In addition, these standards are also aimed at governing the design and development of legal educational materials as well as serving as pertinent references to other stakeholders like practicing barristers and consumers of legal services.

The bifurcation of the legal profession in the UK also provides law graduates with the choice of practicing as ‘solicitors’ and the UK Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA) provides different pathways in becoming a solicitor and prescribes relevant codes of conduct and professional standards governing solicitors. For those with a qualifying law degree, as in the case of the BSB, it requires vocational and skills training beyond graduation from a law school to be admitted as a solicitor. In this path, law graduates are required to complete a legal practice course (LPC), a prescribed period of recognized training (PRT) through two years’ work experience and a further professional skills course (PSC). These vocational requirements to become a solicitor not only reconfirms the limitations of law school curriculum in inculcating practice skills but also highlight that the expectation of the skill sets and standards of the profession is much higher than what a law school typically imparts. The SRA, like the BSB, also prescribes its own Practice Skills Standards (PSS), every trainee solicitor should strive to achieve before becoming a qualified solicitor (SRA, 2021).

2.1 Communication and Language Skill sets

The standards and competences expected out of a barrister are classified into four distinct categories namely ‘distinctive characteristics of a barrister’, ‘personal values and standards’, ‘working with others’ in the profession and lay individuals and finally, ‘management of practice’ of law. Although there are wide arrays of standards and competences prescribed in each of the above groups, notable ones for the purpose of the present paper, particularly those pertaining to language skills should be appraised. The distinctive characteristics, barristers should possess are further subdivided into 4 sections in which language skills are identified as one of the essential practical skills. The language requirement transcends beyond basic elements of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and spoken fluency and mandates the use of appropriate vocabulary and exercise command over the language to handle complex and detailed argumentations.

The barristers are also required to demonstrate good communication skills in written, spoken and non-verbal forms while conveying to others as well as in receiving and being responsive to what others communicate. While emphasis is placed on 'precision and accurate writing with clarity', and 'articulation with fluency', it expects the barristers to possess the 'ability to adapt their language and communication' suitable to their target audience in diverse positions and backgrounds. Specific attributes in this context includes selection of appropriate medium of communication, as well as adapting language and non-verbal communication suitable to the nature of the message and target audience, employing appropriate techniques for listening and questioning, analysis of written information, requesting and providing clarification of meanings in appropriate contexts, exercising good language skills, presenting cogent and succinct arguments, and exercising these traits appropriately in all engagements carried out in person or in remote distance.

Legal drafting skills with the use of a clear language that focuses on the issues relevant to their cases are mandated in the specific context of drafting standard court documents like claim forms, case and witness statements, various applications and orders, indictments and appeal documents, and skeleton arguments. As a part of the drafting skills, the barristers should be able to draft accurate and legally effective contentious and non-contentious documents, drafting with or without reference to precedents, identifying and addressing relevant factual and legal issues, complying with prescribed legal forms as well as exercising good language and communication skills. Finally, regarding language, the barristers are also expected to possess a range of attributes that are pertinent to persuasive oral advocacy skills. To effectively communicate their client's case, a barrister should be able to make submissions in a coherent, concise and structured manner, with citations of appropriate legal authorities and materials. They should be aware of other relevant parties in any forum and be capable of appropriately engaging with them while representing their clients. In particular, the need to ensure audible communication using pace and language appropriate to the forum in the process of making submissions and questioning of witness is emphasized.

The fact that many of the language and related communication attributes identified above are sought to be developed during the stages of pupillage and work-based learning, confirms the contention that the inculcation of even the threshold standards to be a barrister is not accomplished by the law schools alone. Although, law schools may not be in the best position to instill all the relevant skills, with the advent of AI, the question that the present paper raises are whether could do more and how they shall strive to enhance their roles by effectively incorporating AI embedded curriculum and pedagogies. Regarding the above identified language and communication related attributes, it can be credibly argued that, given the potential of emerging AI technologies to enhance learning and productivity, law school curriculum and pedagogies should sufficiently embed related AI technology through necessary curriculum and pedagogical reforms. For such a purpose, it is essential to elaborate further on certain other attributes (beyond language and related communication) expected out of barristers, where AI technologies could play an essential role, which should make a much stronger case for law schools to incorporate AI training.

2.2 Legal Research, Analytical and Other Practice Standards

With the rapid development of AI applications specifically aimed at enhancing legal practice and related compliance works like legal specific large language models (Legal LLMs) and Regulatory Technology (RegTech), the paper argues that there is an increasing need for law schools to systematically identify specific skills and standards that should benefit from effective AI engagement. Beyond the language and communication related attributes discussed earlier, from a whole series of other skills, standards and competences prescribed by the BSB in four distinct categories, a set of specific attributes where the use of AI should play a positive role can be noted. They include, firstly, in the category of ‘distinctive characteristics of barrister’, having in-depth knowledge and understanding of key concepts and principles of public and private law, knowledge of law and procedures in specific areas of practice, ability to carry out effective analysis and evaluation to identify relevant facts and applicable law in individual cases, rendering concise legal advice clearly and accurately both in oral or written form, ensuring that decisions made and advices rendered are supported by evidence and based on reasoning, identification of strengths and weaknesses of all relevant parties to effectively negotiate and promote the best interest of clients, making independent and sound judgements through application of analytical and evaluation skills as well as clear understanding of relevant facts and the governing law, and using effective research skills to identify, analyze and evaluate both legal and non-legal issues.

As part of the necessary oral advocacy skills discussed earlier, there are also other attributes not related to language, which includes ability to recall, comprehend and apply relevant law and procedure to the matters being dealt with, ability to effectively employ analytical and evaluative skills to the all related works, capacity to determine strength and weaknesses of perspectives of involved parties, preparedness to make effective and reasoned arguments as well as managing facts to support the position taken and arguments made, appropriate usage and citation of legal authorities, being receptive and responsive to questions and counter arguments, and effective and efficient deployment of advocacy skills even under circumstances warranting actions in short notices or under pressure. Finally, the barristers are also required to in be compliance with their core duties and prescribed professional standards including the pertinent code of conduct.

Secondly, under the category of ‘personal values and standards’, the expected traits include acting with integrity (including avoidance of any personal bias) and independence to promote justice, making honest dealings with others, respecting diversity to ensure equality and non-tolerance of any unlawful discrimination, adopting a reflective work approach that enables admission of mistakes and correction of errors, and carrying out adaptable and flexible legal practice through continuous maintenance and development of knowledge and skills. Thirdly, in the category of ‘working with others’, the expected attributes in the context of work place of legal practice, the barristers are expected to recognize and exercise their paramount duty to act protecting the best interest of their respective clients, grasp and follow principles of team work in appropriate contexts, make appropriate responses to people from diverse backgrounds as well as to the needs and sensitivities arising from specific circumstances, and keep clients abreast of case progress in addition managing their expectations. In addition, the barristers are endowed with additional responsibilities while working with lay individuals lacking knowledge of law and procedures,

especially in cases involving opponents not having the benefit of representation by qualified legal advisors.

Finally, under the category of 'management of practice', barristers are required to demonstrate understanding of the implications of self-practice of law and being employed as a barrister and adopt certain prescribed measures, ensure effective and efficient legal practice through relevant organizational and management skills, ensure delivery of all work commitment through sufficient planning of personal workload and absences, deliver professional services through clear understanding of organizational systems and structures at the workplace, ensure confidentiality of affairs of the clients and use of secure technology where relevant, and maintain punctuality and diligence in record keeping and case files.

Like the BSB skill sets for barristers, the SRA PSS also prescribes a similar set of skills and standards. However, some of the distinct skills enumerated under the PSS should be noted. Notable ones pertaining to language include usage of accurate language with the avoidance of unnecessary technical language to communicate and draft clearly and succinctly, effective use of active listening to obtain relevant information in dispute resolution process, refining skills to present oral and return communication appropriate for the purpose and the recipient, drafting effective legal documents that reflect the instruction of clients with accuracy, drafting documents originally and with the use of precedents to prepare typical instruments produced by solicitors like contracts, leases, wills and trust deeds, corporate resolutions, witness statements and affidavits, and conveyancing documents, amending drafts received from other sides, and drafting and preparing papers to facilitate resolution of any contentious issue in dispute resolution process.

Beyond language related skills, the SRA PSS prescribes a wide range of skills relevant for solicitors under the categories of advocacy and oral presentation, dispute resolution, case and transaction management, communication skills, establishment and maintenance of professional relationships, drafting, interviewing and advising, legal research, negotiation, ethics, professionalism and judgement as well as management of person and work. Among them, many specific skills are analogous to the ones prescribed for barristers albeit with distinct emphasis to meet the needs of the professional work carried out by solicitors. It is not necessary to elaborate all of them, but to highlight the nature of the distinction, the prescribed skills related to legal research for solicitors could be an indicative example.

The legal research skills expected out of solicitors transcends beyond legal issues and comprehend factual, historical and commercial matters. It involves engagements with client interviews, analysis of corporate searches, investigation of property titles and searches, and partaking in due diligence enquiries. It is evident that the research tasks of solicitors clearly transcend beyond research of legal sources and authorities typically carried out by the barristers and comprehends a wider variety of subject matters that would require specific research expertise and tools. Consequently, the scope of AI applications for the work of barristers and solicitors and the related training necessary could be distinguished between the two walks of the profession.

3. Emerging AI Applications in the Legal Profession

After systematic exposition of key knowledge, skills and standards expected out of the legal professionals, it is crucial to assess to what extent the advent of AI and its huge potential, is impacting the legal profession particularly in serving the needs of the skills and standards identified earlier. With the emergence of the generative AI, adoption of AI tools by the UK law firms were found to have doubled even in 2024, prompting the transformation of the profession that was conventionally rooted in human intellect into a technologically driven one (White, S. 2024). The transformative effect in legal practice is found to have emerged through AI driven legal research, AI applications in creation of legal documents and automation, AI enhanced due diligence and risk assessment exercises, and predictive analytics to forecast outcomes in resolution of legal disputes. AI applications are developed enhancing other typical works of lawyers like review and analysis of contractual clauses, drafting various legal documents and customization, analysis of large diverse data to achieve effective e-discovery of admissible evidence, and achieving timely and effective regulatory compliance and satisfaction of procedural requirements. AI applications have also emerged for the purpose of detection of frauds and even in carrying out sentiment analysis to predict potential reactions of jury members and judges in response to the planned arguments and advocacy styles before the formal hearing of the cases.

The expanded use of generative AI tools continued in 2025, as the Thomson Reuters Institute in its Generative AI in Professional Services Report-2025 surveying participants from major jurisdictions involving the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, Argentina and Mexico found a much wider adoption of generative AI among individuals in key professions. They were found to be using the publicly available generative AI applications as well as industry specific generative AI applications (Thomson Reuters, 2025). In addition, the organizational use of generative AI tools in the same period was found to have doubled. Regarding the specific generative AI adoption in the legal profession and the government, the report found increasing AI applications in various tasks reflective of the specific skills and standards discussed earlier in the paper. AI applications were deployed in carrying out certain key tasks of the legal profession like document review, legal research, summarization of documents, drafting of legal briefs and memos, drafting of contracts and correspondences, contract policy compliance, data extraction from contracts, knowledge management, and preparation of deposition questions. However, despite the increasing AI applications available for different professions, the Thomson Reuters study found that majority of the respondents have not received any generative AI training at work prompting the question how such professionals could acquire the relevant knowledge of use of generative AI through alternative ways? This reinforces the importance of the enquiry regarding the role and responsibility of law schools in filling the void.

In 2026, the adoption of generative AI tools in major professions was found to have further doubled in comparison with the previous year both by individual professionals as well as relevant organizations. Although it was discovered that most of the applications of the AI continued to be confined to the internal work of the organizations, the frequency of the use of genitive AI within individual organizations has considerably increased. However, the trend of usage of 'Agentic AI', which was found to have emerged in 2026, albeit at a smaller scale, is predicted to expand

substantially in the coming years (Thomson Reuters, 2026). This could inevitably increase the use of AI for workflow transcending beyond individual organizations, as the potential of agentic AI to effectively handle external tasks and resulting synergies and benefits would be too important to ignore.

It is also important to note that the individual generative AI usage in law firms and corporate legal departments has consolidated, albeit most of which in these two segments have been witnessed in the usage of ‘publicly available generative AI tools’ followed by the usage of ‘generative AI tools for enterprise business’ and the ‘industry specific generative or agentic AI tools.’ However, even though the usage of the last two tools has been lagging, their adoption by law firms and corporate legal divisions are found to be higher than the adoption by taxation firms. These findings reinforce the argument of growing relevance and receptiveness of AI tools by the legal professional, which need to be assessed and reflected by the law schools in their curriculum. Although, studies like the Thomson Reuters survey have tracked the general capability of emerging AI tools and their growing adoption by the legal profession, the need to review specific AI applications and capabilities in alignment with the necessary legal skills and standards warranted by the professional licensing bodies identified earlier is crucial.

There are different sources that can be referred to identify emerging AI applications in the legal profession. However, to ensure the real professional relevance and utility of those applications, it is imperative to assess the technology and tools from the perspective of the professional licensing bodies. As they are the institutions empowered to prescribe skills and standards warranted out of legal professionals, the AI tools reviewed by them to guide lawyers can be expected to have the potential to contribute to the relevant skills and standards. In this regard, the AI tools recommended by the Mississippi Bar in the United States (US) can serve as a pertinent example. The rapid development in the US pioneering in AI technology for the legal profession has prompted local professional bodies like the Mississippi Bar to study and guide AI tools for lawyers.

The review of select AI tools from the guide that are presented in major categories of case management tools, case outcome prediction tools, contract analysis and management tools, E-discovery tools, legal research tools, and legal specific LLMs can serve as a typical classification of AI applications spanning across different skill sets warranted by the profession and the licensing bodies. The specific AI tools for legal practice under these categories that deserves to be considered for curriculum reforms include 2nd Chair.ai, Clio Duo, Filevine, LEAP, My Case, Smokeball, CosmoLex, Lex Machina, Diligen, Ironclad, Kira Systems, Everlaw, Relativity, Bloomberg Law, Harvey AI, Lexis+, vLex fastcase, Westlaw Edge, and CoCounsel (Mississippi Bar, 2025). Similar studies and classification can also be found in comparable common law jurisdictions. For example, the review of specific AI tools for legal practice by the British Institute of International and Comparative Law study in the UK classifying them under the categories of legal research and e-discovery, document automation, predictive legal analysis, legal review, case management, and legal advice and expertise automation is another pertinent source for law school reference (BIICL, 2023).

Among several AI tools emerging in the legal profession, it is imperative to assess the scope of the tools that specifically contribute to the language needs and skills essential for the legal

practice. For example, AI tools like Habeas that are designed to facilitate one of the most important language related skills in practice namely legal interpretation of statutory texts and other written sources of law (Habeas, 2026). It is equally significant to question the technical capabilities of legal language-based AI applications in adopting different canons of interpretations (as well as with reference to any relevant statute of interpretations or law of treaties) conventionally adopted in legal interpretations. The veracity of specific legal language focused AI systems should be reviewed. The claims about the ability of legal language-based systems like Habeas to have a contextual understanding and make a semantic analysis should be tested. Finally, it is equally indispensable to review and compare the key capabilities of some select AI tools from the various discussed categories to determine their potential and limitations in fulfilling the skills and standards for professional practice identified earlier in the paper.

4. AI in Law School Curriculum and Pedagogy

Given the findings relating to the skills and standards warranted out of legal professionals as prescribed by the licensing bodies, and the promises of the emerging AI technology with a huge potential to serve the identified skills and standards, the question naturally shifts to the role of law schools in providing essential training in the usage of AI through law school curriculum and pedagogy. At the very outset, the apparent paradox arising from the finding that the acquisition of the skills and standards is generally sought through vocational training that transcends beyond law school graduation may raise question whether law schools should undertake to provide relevant AI training? In the light of the earlier finding that the law firms and organizations have not provided any formal and systematic training in generative AI usage to their staff, as well as the lack of evidence of any reforms in inculcating AI related skills in vocational training or work programs of licensing bodies, it is arguable that law schools are in the best position to undertake such an important mission.

Even though law schools have conventionally focused on legal knowledge acquisition, the curriculum and pedagogies still featured certain foundational skill acquisitions elements. For example, the very pedagogical approach of Socratic method of classroom teaching itself arguably served as the fundamental exposure to law students in developing analytical and argumentative skills that are further fine-tuned during the vocational training stages after the graduation. Moreover, law schools also typically featured skill development courses like legal drafting, mooted and advocacy. Law schools could have always been a natural candidate to provide a more extensive and elaborate legal skills training parallelly with the legal knowledge dissemination. However, limitation of resources and time have prompted a self-restraint among law schools in providing a more extensive skills training. But with the advent of the generative and agentic AI, with its immense potential to automate and generate the outcomes, which were erstwhile expected out of individuals acquiring desired professional skills, law schools are presented with a wonderful opportunity to take a lead in AI training.

The call for law schools to step into AI training will raise a fundamental question regarding the dearth of resources that conventionally prevented law schools from providing the whole array of the skill sets training. However, this question can be negated with the argument that there is a

fundamental difference between the demands of providing training to individuals in diverse professional skills and standards and the AI skills training. Firstly, as indicated already, providing AI training is not aimed at developing a diverse set of legal skills at individual levels to achieve an output with a desired standard, but training them on the use of a technology that can produce the same output and standard. The former will be highly resource demanding and individual capacity in acquiring diverse legal skills would greatly differ. However, the later, being a training of an enabling technology, would be less resource oriented and capable of providing more consistent results.

Secondly, in any case, the potential role AI technology could play in promoting the effectiveness of teaching pedagogies and assessment methods, learning and research enhancement, as well as in meeting the demands and expectations of AI literacy from prospective employers, makes the provision of AI training an inevitable choice for universities to stay in the forefront of tertiary education. To investigate the veracity of the above arguments, it is important to carry out an exposition of specific law school curriculum and pedagogies to determine the scope and limitation of AI adoption and training in contemporary legal education.

To keep the professional practice perspective, reference to the development of law school curriculum reforms incorporating AI training as identified by the professional licensing body in the US namely, the American Bar Association (ABA) in its study in 2024 provides useful insights. The ABA study identified that more than half of the twenty-nine law schools studied have started to offer formal classes on AI and more than eighty percent of those schools providing opportunities and facilities for students to gain hands on AI usage experience. It is important to review the curriculum of the ABA studied law schools as of 2026 and how they have transformed over the past two years to keep up with the fast-changing AI technology landscape. Some of the Law school's curricula highlighted by the ABA study includes Case Western Reserve Law School, Suffolk University Law School, Vanderbilt University Law School, Stanford Law School, North Carolina Central University School of Law, University of Pennsylvania, and Georgetown University Law Centre (ABA, 2025).

Select law school AI curriculum from the above ABA studied law schools should be reviewed along with some of the other law schools that have conspicuous plans of introducing AI in their curriculum like the University of Chicago Law School that had planned to introduce AI Modules in 2026 (N.A.Coloma, 2025). In addition, it is essential to review the scope of some practical courses on AI applications for legal practice to determine their potential to match the professional skills and standards identified in the paper. Some of the AI courses introduced by the Boston University Law school in its Legal Practice Certificate Program like AI in transactional and advanced legal research, AI for Persuasive Writing, AI Savvy Lawyer, AI, Compliance and Litigation, AI Legal Prompt Lab, as well as AI for Legal Conceptualization, Reasoning and Analysis are also worth reviewing in this regard (BU Law, 2026).

5. Caveats and Emerging Regulatory Standards of use of AI in the Legal Profession

Based on the findings of the exposition of law schools' adoption of emerging AI tools and provision of related training, it should be possible to determine various curriculum reforms and design choices available for law schools. The identification and review of early adopters of AI in legal curriculum will demonstrate different levels of AI adoption and training strategies available for other law schools. Developing generic skills in the usage of AI at law schools should pave way to form the necessary foundation and capabilities capable of enabling law graduates to employ specialized and firm specific AI tools in their future legal practice. Beyond the basic approach, a more ideal and balanced AI adoption and training strategy for law schools should be emphasized. Such a strategy will take cognizance various threats and challenges emerging from use of AI technologies in the legal profession as emerging from various stake holders and relevant institutions. Starting from the perception of risks by the practitioners who use AI tools in legal practice to those emerging from relevant institutions and bodies should be given due regard in building an AI strategy by law schools. It will be important to examine the relevant directions and standards prescribed by professional bodies and dispute resolution forums in recommending how a balance should be achieved between inculcating AI skills and averting risks in law school curriculum reforms and AI training.

After some of specific risks of use of AI in the professional practice were revealed, like those resulting from the AI hallucination, it becomes crucial that any law school curriculum and training should be embedded with necessary risk aversion measures. For example, instances like the case law cited by attorneys before a Colorado state court and a New York court in the USA using ChatGPT were found to be non-existent and fictitious should raise necessary alarms for law schools in designing curriculum and imparting training on AI use for the budding legal professionals. In *Roberto Mata v Avianca, Inc.* (2023), the New York court found that the plaintiff's attorney in his pleadings presented to the court had relied on judicial precedents that were either non-existent or were distorted in support of the claims made against the defendant. In the law firm engaged by the plaintiff, while one of the attorneys prepared the case using the generic AI tool of ChatGPT, another signed the pleadings without verifying the authorities relied on before presenting it to the court.

Upon discovery of the grave negligence, the court sanctioned the law firm and the two attorneys involved in the case for making frivolous legal arguments constituting an abuse of the adversary system. The second attorney was also sanctioned for not verifying the authorities before signing the pleadings despite having knowledge of the limitations of AI research tools made available by the law firm. In addition to the two attorneys, the law firm was also held 'jointly and severally' liable. The dictum in *Roberto Mata* case evidences the serious risks that could potentially arise in the usage of generic AI in legal practice, including the risk of AI hallucination, which should be taken cognizance and addressed effectively (Goyal, 2025).

It is important to note that the law firm in *Roberto Mata* case, while acknowledging its responsibility had indicated suitable remedial measures to avert such future incidents through usage of specialized AI applications for legal practice like vLex Fastcase and Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs. The above undertaking by a professional law firm before the judiciary

categorically supports the argument that any AI orientation of budding lawyers in law schools should be more focused on specific lawtech applications, like vLex Fastcase that is powerful (CLA, 2026) and capable of averting serious pitfalls of generic AI identified and condemned by the judiciary in *Roberto Mata* case. Moreover, the case also evidences the need for law schools to transcend beyond a more static AI embedded law school curriculum for graduating students and offer a range of dynamic CLE programs for practicing lawyers to keep abreast of the fast-evolving legal technology and applications.

Like the experience in the US, certain cases in the UK like *Frederick Ayinde v London Borough of Haringey* (2025), *Hamad Al-Haroun v Qatar National Bank QPSC and QNB Capital LLC* (2025) and *Sabrena Rodney v Gee's Micro Bar & Pitstop and Ors.* (2026), where the erroneous input of AI arising in legal practice were identified followed by legal challenges and judicial condemnation. These cases and the related judicial strictures should be given due regard in the development of AI training and curriculum. Moreover, the response of the professional licensing bodies, as well as other dispute resolution forums prescribing preventive measures pertaining to the use of AI in legal practice should be given due consideration. It is important to determine the necessary caveats resulting from the cases above and from relevant recommendations of key professional bodies to identify the preventive measures any law school AI curriculum development should incorporate.

6. Conclusion

The findings emerging from the foregoing analysis clearly demonstrate that the potential of AI to cater to the crucial skills and standards of the legal profession cannot be ignored by any relevant stakeholders and institutions. Law schools are no different and indeed they are presented with an excellent opportunity to reinforce their role in cultivating budding lawyers through incorporation of AI training in law school curriculum. The identified distinction between high resource oriented individual advocacy skills training and the feasibility of cultivating law students with the capacity in using AI technology, which can meet the prescribed skill requirements, should quell concerns of lack of resources among law schools. Despite the feasibility, the paper underscores the importance of the need for law schools to construct a dynamic AI based curriculum that is more aligned towards the specific professional skills and standards, instead of a generic one that is less sensitive to those skills and standards.

It is crucial to consider various language and communication-based skills and standards identified in the paper, along with those pertaining to the legal research, analytics and other practice standards prescribed by professional licensing bodies. In this regard, the current common practice of using generic AI tools like Chat GPT, which is capable of marginally serving the required skills, is found to have some serious shortcomings like those revealed in the judicial cases discussed in the paper. This should raise relevant caveats to law schools and should prompt them to assess AI applications that are more specifically developed for the legal profession in determining the necessary curriculum design. In this pursuit, law schools should necessarily take cognizance of specific trends in AI adoption by the legal professionals and law firms.

Moreover, specific legal AI tools that are designed to serve the legal professionals exclusively should be the subject of focus in any AI legal training agenda. Even such professional specific AI tools should be assessed benchmarking with the relevant skill sets and standards prescribed by the professional licensing bodies before being chosen for curriculum inclusion. It is equally paramount for the law school to consider of the major risks of AI usage in the legal profession identified by different sources, including the judiciary and professional licensing bodies, and give due consideration to the relevant concerns by building essential caveats in any AI based law school curriculum. AI embedded curriculum and training programs initiated by individual law schools should seek for a more concerted effort with due consideration to efforts of their peers as well as any regulatory standards and jurisprudence emerging from other institutions and judicial bodies. Any such curriculum should also constantly keep up with the rapid developments in AI technologies to ensure that role of law school AI training remains vibrant and vital in meeting the fundamental expectations of the legal profession and clientele in serving the pious purpose of pursuing justice.

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