



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE 2026 NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION LEGAL EDUCATION SUMMIT HELD AT THE NBA NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, ABUJA, ON MONDAY, 25TH MAY, 2026, WITH THEME: ACCELERATING LEGAL EDUCATION REFORM IN NIGERIA: PROGRESS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), through its Legal Education Committee, convened the 2026 Legal Education Summit at its National Secretariat in Abuja, bringing together a distinguished assembly of stakeholders from academia, regulatory institutions, professional bodies, and the wider legal community.

The Summit attracted eminent personalities including members of the Body of Benchers, Senior Advocates of Nigeria, the Attorney-General of the Federation (represented), the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (represented), the Director-General and management of the Nigerian Law School, the Council of Legal Education, Deans of faculties of law, heads of institutions, legal educators, practitioners, policymakers, and students.

The Summit served as a national platform for deep reflection on the state of legal education in Nigeria and the urgent need to reposition it for global relevance, technological advancement, professional competence, and ethical integrity.

Participants unanimously reaffirmed that the quality of legal education directly determines the quality of justice delivery and the credibility of the legal profession.

OBSERVATIONS

The Summit observed as follows:

1. That legal education in Nigeria requires urgent, structured, and sustained reform to align with global best practices and contemporary legal realities.
2. That despite past reform efforts, systemic challenges persist, including infrastructural deficits, overcrowded institutions, uneven academic standards, and weak integration of practical training.
3. That a widening gap exists between university-based legal education and

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vocational legal training, resulting in inadequate practice readiness among graduates.

4. That the Nigerian Law School continues to experience excessive pressure due to over-admission, regulatory challenges, and upstream deficiencies in university legal education.
5. That curriculum content in many institutions remains largely theoretical and insufficiently responsive to emerging areas of legal practice.
6. That concerns persist regarding compliance with admission standards, proliferation of law faculties, and enforcement of regulatory benchmarks.
7. That legal education must evolve to incorporate technology, innovation, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary competence.

RESOLUTIONS

After extensive deliberations, the Summit resolved as follows:

1. Standardisation of Legal Education

That the *NBA Standards and Rules on Legal Education* be recognised as a critical framework for strengthening minimum standards, quality assurance, and institutional accountability across all law faculties in Nigeria.

2. Curriculum Reform and Modernisation

That the LL.B curriculum be comprehensively reviewed to reflect contemporary legal practice, including emerging fields such as:

- Technology and Artificial Intelligence law
- Data protection and cybersecurity law
- Energy and environmental law
- Commercial and international trade law
- Regulatory compliance and governance

3. Experiential Legal Training

That clinical legal education, moot court exercises, legal drafting laboratories, simulations, and structured externship programmes be institutionalised as compulsory components of legal training.

4. Strengthening Practice Readiness

That legal education be deliberately structured to produce graduates who are practice-ready through enhanced legal writing, advocacy training, client simulation exercises, and ethical decision-making frameworks.

5. Regulatory Enforcement and Compliance

That regulatory agencies intensify monitoring and enforcement of accreditation standards, admission quotas, and programme quality control to curb declining standards and institutional non-compliance.

6. Strengthening the Nigerian Law School System

That urgent reforms be implemented to enhance infrastructure, digital learning capacity, staffing, and training resources within the Nigerian Law School, alongside stronger coordination with universities.

7. Technology Integration

That legal education institutions fully integrate digital tools, legal databases, e-learning systems, and AI-supported learning platforms into teaching, assessment, and research.

8. Institutional Collaboration

That structured collaboration mechanisms be institutionalised among the NBA, Council of Legal Education, Nigerian Law School, universities, judiciary, and law firms for coordinated reform implementation.

9. Internship and Mentorship Framework

That a national standardised framework for internships and externships be developed, ensuring supervision, quality control, structured learning outcomes, and professional mentorship.

10. Legislative Reform Support

That stakeholders support ongoing legislative and policy reforms aimed at strengthening the Legal Education (Consolidation, etc.) Act to reflect modern realities.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE 2022 NBA LEGAL EDUCATION SUMMIT (EKITI)

For continuity and to honour the commitments made at the inaugural 2022 NBA Legal Education Summit held at Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State (themed “Reimagining Legal Education in Nigeria”), the following resolutions adopted at that Summit are hereby reaffirmed and incorporated as part of the continuing reform agenda of the NBA Legal Education Committee:

Nigerian Law School (NLS) Reform

That the proliferation of NLS campuses be condemned, and that instead of expanding the number of campuses, existing campuses should be better

funded and equipped with superior teaching facilities, expert staff, and modern infrastructure. Post-LLB training should be decentralised to allow universities and private service providers, licensed and/or accredited by the Council of Legal Education, to also provide post-LLB training. Government is further encouraged to introduce public-private partnership arrangements to direct private sector funding to the NLS.

Separation of the Council of Legal Education from the NLS

That the Council of Legal Education be institutionally separated from the NLS to enable it to independently regulate and oversee legal education in Nigeria. The CLE should have its own office building, dedicated staff, and an Executive Secretary, with the mandate to supervise the NLS and law faculties; design, provide and periodically update legal education curricula; license and accredit institutions for post-LLB training; and independently set, administer, and assess bar final examinations. A joint committee of the CLE and NUC should also be constituted to resolve the current duplication of accreditation functions.

Funding of Legal Education

That government provide sufficient and sustained budgetary allocation to legal education to arrest the decline in standards attributable to inadequate funding, improve infrastructure, and ensure access to modern ICT facilities and qualified staff across law faculties and the NLS.

Entry Requirements, Recruitment, and Welfare of Law Teachers

That the minimum entry requirement for the study of law in Nigerian universities be raised to a first degree in any relevant discipline, in line with global standards. That the recruitment of law teachers be conducted transparently, without politicisation or nepotism, and that only skilled and qualified persons be appointed. That law teachers be accorded improved remuneration and welfare conditions to attract and retain quality talent, and be encouraged to undertake sabbaticals at top-tier institutions and law firms to deepen their practical expertise.

Proliferation of Law Faculties and Accreditation

That the CLE and NUC ensure constant verification and accreditation review of all law faculties, with only those possessing requisite facilities and qualified teachers permitted to offer law programmes. That a comprehensive national database of law lecturers be established to curb the unethical practice of borrowing faculty members to satisfy accreditation requirements. That the NBA ensure only universities which have produced quality graduates for at least five years are permitted to run law programmes.

Compulsory Pupillage

That compulsory pupillage of two (2) years be introduced as contained in the Legal Education Regulation Bill, with the CLE, NBA, and NUC directed to urgently work out modalities for implementation and enforcement, so as to ensure the production of thoroughbred professionals in the legal profession.

Curriculum Review

That the LL.B and Nigerian Law School curricula be comprehensively revised to capture practical and emerging areas of law, including technology law, artificial intelligence, accounting and financial reporting, entrepreneurship, cybersecurity, alternative dispute resolution, online dispute resolution, and legal project management. That curricula be redesigned to integrate more business and entrepreneurial skills, equip students for cross-disciplinary learning, and embed clinical legal education—including Legal Entrepreneurship Clinics—as a mandatory component of legal training.

Legal Education Pedagogy and Technology

That legal education pedagogy be comprehensively reviewed to adopt student-centred, Socratic, and experiential methods of teaching, ensuring clear lesson outcomes and active learning. That digitalization of legal education be treated as a necessity, with law teachers trained to engage students using technology and innovative methodologies. That new teaching methods—including simulations, court and law firm attachments, externships, and summer training programmes—be deployed to make graduates more practice-ready. That an integrated pedagogy guide be developed for the training of current and incoming law teachers.

Continuing Legal Education (CLE)

That the existing rules on Continuing Legal Education be strictly implemented, with any lawyer who fails to comply being prohibited from practice. That the NBA adopt the outcome-focused CPD model, as obtainable in the United Kingdom, allowing lawyers and firms to develop tailored CPD programmes under NBA supervision. That the NBA-ICLE partner with law faculties to develop bespoke LLM and certificate programmes with online learning modules and scholarship opportunities for young practitioners.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Quality Assurance

That the NBA work with the CLE to establish a robust mechanism for monitoring and evaluating law teaching performance in the NLS and law faculties. That law faculties and the NLS jointly develop data collection methodologies and progress reporting mechanisms for assessment schemes.

That the CLE and NUC develop sustainable quality assurance mechanisms for the legal education system. That quarterly lectures in the form of panel discussions or visiting lectureships be institutionalised in the NLS and universities, bringing in practitioners and professionals to discuss niche legal areas and emerging trends.

Mentorship and the Role of the NBA

That a structured mentoring programme for young lecturers and lawyers be implemented collaboratively by the CLE and NBA. That the NBA formulate a comprehensive Legal Education Policy setting out its position on reforms and submit same to appropriate institutions for implementation. That the NBA Legal Education Committee be maintained as a standing committee with a mandate to regularly organise faculty training and professional development programmes for legal educators in line with the NBA Constitution. That the Legal Education Act be amended to incorporate reforms necessary for the effective improvement of legal education in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Summit specifically recommended as follows:

1. That a uniform national minimum benchmark for legal education be enforced across all accredited Nigerian universities.
2. That legal education curricula be urgently modernised to reflect global legal trends and emerging areas of practice.
3. That clinical legal education and experiential learning be made mandatory graduation requirements in all law faculties.
4. That a centralised national internship coordination framework be explored to standardise student internship placements and learning outcomes.
5. That stronger collaboration be established between universities, the Nigerian Law School, the NBA, and law firms for seamless transition from academic to professional training.
6. That admission standards be strictly enforced, including compliance with approved subject combinations and institutional quotas.
7. That technology-driven legal education systems should be adopted nationwide to enhance teaching, learning, and research efficiency.
8. That continuous professional development and mentorship structures be

strengthened for young lawyers and law students.

9. That greater institutional accountability mechanisms be introduced to ensure compliance with accreditation and quality assurance standards.
10. That legal education reform be treated as a continuous national priority beyond administrative transitions, with clear monitoring and implementation frameworks.

COMMENDATIONS

The Summit commended:

1. The President and leadership of the Nigerian Bar Association for visionary direction and commitment to legal education reform.
2. The Chairman of the Legal Education Committee, Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi, SAN, FCI Arb, for exemplary leadership and stakeholder coordination.
3. The Director-General of the Nigerian Law School and management team for sustained efforts in professional training.
4. The Attorney-General of the Federation, INEC Chairman, Council of Legal Education, Nigerian Law Teachers Association, and Nigerian Law Reform Commission for their valuable contributions.
5. All Senior Advocates of Nigeria, deans, legal educators, practitioners, and students for their robust engagement.
6. The Local Organising Committee and rapporteurs for their professionalism, precision, and high-quality documentation of proceedings.

WAY FORWARD

The Summit reaffirmed that legal education reform must be continuous, coordinated, and insulated from institutional discontinuity. In this regard, the Summit highlighted the importance of organising the Legal Education Summit as a biennial event.

Stakeholders committed to sustained collaboration aimed at strengthening legal education architecture, bridging theory and practice, and ensuring global competitiveness of Nigerian-trained lawyers.

CONCLUSION

The 2026 NBA Legal Education Summit concluded with a strong consensus that legal education in Nigeria must be restructured to reflect contemporary realities, strengthen professional competence, and uphold global standards.

Participants expressed optimism that the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations will significantly reposition legal education in Nigeria and enhance the quality of justice delivery.

Dated this 25TH day of May 2026



Mazi Afam Osigwe, SAN
President



Prof. Damilola S. Olawuyi, SAN
Chairman, NBA Legal Education Committee

