LAW REVIEW HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES
2019/2020

elsa

The European Law Students' Association

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

We are proud to present the newly drafted Law Review Handbook. Law Reviews have a strong history in ELSA with the ELSA Law Review being the second oldest project of our network dating back more than 30 years. Throughout the years, National and Local Groups have developed their own Law Reviews with great success.

This Handbook is drafted with National and Local Groups in mind. It may be used as an organisers manual and takes you through step by step how and why you should create a Law Review for your group of ELSA.

In drafting this Handbook, we have been especially mindful of the particularities in the editorial process of a Law Review. Therefore, you will find an outline of the suggested editorial process in this Handbook. You will be supported in your work by the Review Form Template which you may find in the Law Review package as well as a guideline on how to conduct an editorial review.*

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the process of your Law Review, please do not hesitate to contact us as academicactivities@elsa.org or lawreview@elsa.org.

We hope you enjoy reading this Handbook and wish you the best of luck with your Law Reviews!

Best wishes,

Hendrik Daði Jónsson
Deputy Editor in Chief of the ELSA Law Review
ELSA International 2019/2020

&

Sarah Ikast Kristoffersen
Vice President in charge of Academic Activities
International Board of ELSA 2019/2020

* The supporting documents were drafted with assistance from Ljubica Kaurin and Maria Sofia Ferreira, members of the Editorial Board of the ELSA Law Review 2019/2020

ELSA International
Email: lawreview@elsa.org
Tel.: +32 646 26 26
Web: lawreview.elsa.org

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1. What is a Law Review?

Guiding Questions: What is a Law Review? What does not constitute a Law Review? Why is a Law Review published?

The International Council Meeting Decision Book of ELSA defines a Law Review as "a legal publication consisting of contributions from students, practitioners and academics." While this definition is effective in identifying what a Law Review is, for the purposes of this Handbook it is helpful to expand on the key characteristics of such a publication to make clear both which elements make a publication a Law Review and which elements disqualify a publication from being a Law Review.

This chapter identifies the following five characteristics as being essential for a legal publication to constitute a Law Review: it must be **periodical**, it must publish **academic legal writing**, it must be managed by an **Editorial Board**, it must be **qualitatively cohesive**, and it must be **peer-reviewed**. The following sections in this chapter expand upon what is meant by each of these characteristics.

1.1 Periodical

Crucially, a Law Review constitutes a periodical which means that it is published on a regular basis (whether annually, semi-annually or biennially). If a legal publication is intended to be published only once or on an irregular basis, it does not fulfil the characteristic of being a periodical and hence should not be considered to be a Law Review. The following are examples of publications which do not constitute a Law Review:

- A published anthology containing the submissions received in an essay competition, consisting of all the essays addressing the same research questions;
- The final research report of a Legal Research Group.

1.2 Academic Legal Writing

While each Law Review may decide which types of legal writing it publishes (e.g. articles, case notes, letters from the editor), the expectation is that any contribution published should be academic in nature. It is often self-evident from reading a written contribution whether it constitutes academic or non-academic writing. Nevertheless, setting the parameters into a neat definition is difficult, however it could broadly be defined as a piece of legal writing in which the author conveys an argument that is coherently structured (typically through body paragraphs) and relies on evidence in the form of primary and secondary sources. Another way of ascertaining whether a submission constitutes academic legal writing or not is by conceptualising its audience. Academic legal writing should aim to provide input into a legal conversation or debate on a certain issue or topic. Its intended audience should therefore primarily be scholarly in nature consisting of expert jurists and lawyers, i.e. practitioners, academics, professors, researchers and students. If a piece of writing concerning a topic of law is intended for a different type of audience, such as the public, it will most likely not be considered academic and would therefore not be suitable for publication in a Law Review.

1.3 Editorial Board

An Editorial Board is the indispensable element in the organisational structure of a Law Review. While an Editorial Board may be small or large in its composition and mandate, its quintessential functions are as follows:

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- Set the editorial policy of the Law Review, including both technical and qualitative standards which determine the eligibility of submissions for publication as contributions. This includes everything from the language of the Law Review, the applicable citation style, the maximum and minimum word counts and the scope of the topics of the Law Review;
- Gather contributions to the Law Review through the opening of calls for submissions and promotions thereof; and
- Select the submissions which are deemed eligible and suitable for publication and perform editing prior to publication as required. Note that the editing by the Editorial Board does not constitute a peer-review, however the Editorial Board is responsible for various linguistic and technical editing.

1.4 Qualitative Cohesion

It follows from the fact that a Law Review should be edited by a central Editorial Board that such a publication should be relatively cohesive across the different contributions published in terms of topic, structure, style and layout. Although each Editorial Board must decide which contributions are most appropriate for publication in their Law Review, some characteristics which may undermine a publication's qualitative cohesion and thus the status of the publication as a Law Review are:

- If a publication does not set minimum or maximum standards for word count and as a result publishes contributions which vary greatly in length (e.g. a 1,500 word article and a 15,000 word article).
- If a publication does not have qualitative linguistic standards. Although the academic quality of a contribution is the most important factor in determining whether it is worthy of publication, it is also important that the author has sufficient command of the language in which they are writing.
- If a publication does not have a prescribed citation style for all contributions in the publication, it can undermine the trustworthiness of the publication as a whole due to the heterogeneity in referencing across different contributions.

1.5 Peer-Review

Scholarly peer-review is the most important element which will distinguish between an amateur publication of legal writing and a Law Review. While the Editorial Board conducts the editorial work of shortlisting submissions and bringing them in line with the editorial standards, the peer-review is performed by experts in the legal field which corresponds to the topic of the Law Review who are unaffiliated with the Editorial Board. In the peer-review, the expert conducting the peer-review typically determines whether a shortlisted submission is: (a) suitable and acceptable for publication, (b) suitable and acceptable for publication with revisions, or (c) neither suitable nor acceptable for publication.

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2. Motivation for Establishing a Law Review

Guiding Questions: Why would you establish a Law Review? What are the advantages for your ELSA Group in publishing a Law Review? Why might a Law Review not be the right option for your group?

A Law Review is a project which provides great opportunities to all those who participate in its publication to improve their academic and professional credentials and enhance both their legal and soft skills. This chapter aims to elaborate on the various reasons for which an ELSA Group might establish a Law Review and what the launching of such a project might achieve.

2.1 Why does establishing a Law Review make sense for an ELSA Group?

Whether it be on the international, national or local level, the decision by an ELSA board to establish a Law Review would presumably hinge on it being a project which in some way provides a benefit to our members and advances our *raison d'être*. Notably, the purpose of the ELSA Law Review (defined in the International Council Meeting Decision Book of ELSA) is to "publish original peer-reviewed submissions, the publication of which shall further the vision, purpose and means of ELSA."

As any devoted ELSA member will know, the vision of our Association is: "A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity." Further, the purpose of ELSA is "[t]o contribute to legal education, to foster mutual understanding and to promote social responsibility of law students and young lawyers."

The realisation of our vision and the fulfilment of our purpose are foreseen through our means which are:

- To provide opportunities for law students and young lawyers to learn about other cultures and legal systems in **a spirit of critical dialogue and scientific co-operation**;
- To assist law students and young lawyers to be **internationally minded and professionally skilled**;
- To encourage law students and young lawyers to **act for the good of society**.

The excerpts highlighted above all correspond to reasons why the establishment of a Law Review is way for ELSA (at any of its levels) to accomplish its means and consequently contribute to the realisation of our vision and fulfilment of our purpose. The format of a Law Review can arguably be considered both the oldest-established and most effective way for lawyers and jurists to engage in critical dialogue and scientific co-operation in the form of academic legal writing. Through its topic, a Law Review can also encourage law students and young lawyers to be internationally minded. Furthermore, by encouraging our members to undertake academic legal writing and having that writing published, a Law Review can assist them in enhancing their professional skills. Finally, by publishing the submissions by ELSA members on the topic pertaining to our vision and purpose, we can elevate the voices of those law students and young lawyers as they seek to act for the good of society through their contribution.

2.2 How can publication in a Law Review benefit a member of ELSA?

2.2.1 Professional Development

A member of ELSA whose legal writing is features in a Law Review receives the benefit of a publishing credit, which enhances both their academic and professional profiles. Since ELSA

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members are law students and young lawyers, they typically will not have had their academic legal writing published in a scholarly publication before. This means that a Law Review established within ELSA can be the first time that individual's work is published. In that sense, a Law Review is not only an opportunity for ELSA members to diversify their CVs but can also help them to publish more of their work elsewhere.

2.2.2 Skill Acquisition

A Law Review may publish legal writing that law students have already written for a university course as well as original work prepared specifically for the publication. In both cases, an ELSA Group incentivises that its members grow their skills in the fields of legal research and legal writing by providing them with an avenue to have their legal work published in the form of a Law Review.

2.2.3 Contribution to Legal Debate

Where an ELSA Group establishes a Law Review that is published in a professional manner and made available in forums accessed by legal researchers, such as legal databases (like LexisNexis) or libraries (like the library of the College of Europe), the academic work published therein becomes accessible to others conducting legal research and legal writing, e.g. academics, lawyers, and students. This offers the fantastic opportunity to the ELSA member to have their academic work *make a difference*, acting as a new legal source that may be cited by other students and professionals.

2.3 How can participation in a Law Review's Editorial Board benefit a member of ELSA?

2.3.1 Project Management experience

A Law Review within ELSA is an entirely member-run effort which requires that those involved (law students and/or young lawyers) organise the project and its volunteers in a manner that will yield a published law review within a set timeline. One of the great opportunities ELSA can offer to its members is to acquire practical skills in the management of law-related projects which are typically not gained through the traditional legal curriculum. For a Law Review to be published, many different tasks need to be completed simultaneously and in sequence and these tasks need to be divided between a finite number of volunteers. Especially when managing volunteers, this is valuable experience for anyone to gain in how to manage a project and a team in order to successfully reach a goal.

2.3.2 Editorial experience

The work of being on an Editorial Board requires that one be eagle-eyed, critical and thorough in reviewing submissions and assessing their suitability for publication. Much like a lawyer will face in their professional life, the expectations of a Law Review is that it should be up to standard in terms of its academic, linguistic, technical, and citational quality. As a result, editorial experience is highly useful to aspiring lawyers in developing their transferable skills for the editing of legal writing and the verification of the quality of legal sourcing.

2.3.3 Networking

While an ELSA Group may decide to establish a Law Review by compiling academic legal writing into a PDF and publishing it on its website, this would be a wasted effort if it would not be accompanied by institutional outreach to potential publishing partners such as legal databases, research institutes, and law libraries which might make the publication available to its patrons in some capacity. As a result, being a member of an Editorial Board provides great opportunities to

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individuals to both enhance their networking skills through this outreach process as well as to grow their own professional networks in the form of the contacts they make in that process.

2.4 What must an ELSA Group consider before it decides to establish a Law Review?
As the previous subchapters have illustrated, the establishment of a Law Review is a good way to further the vision, purpose and means of ELSA and it is further a way for an ELSA Group to provide opportunities to its members to develop their skills. However, it must be made clear that this is type of project which requires effective organisation and commitment on behalf of the ELSA Group. The purpose of this subchapter is thus to identify some considerations which an ELSA Group should undertake before it decides to establish a Law Review.

Firstly, **a Law Review must be a periodical** and as such it cannot be established as a standalone effort by a single board which will not be carried forward by the next board. As with other projects which operate on a continuous basis, a successful Law Review requires that the successive Editorial Boards carry forward the *institutional memory* of the publication so that the same lessons do not need to be learned several times.

Secondly, **a Law Review requires human resources** and it cannot in practice be the effort of a single AA officer on an ELSA board. As Chapter 1 introduced and Chapter 5 expands upon, the editorial process is extensive for a Law Review to constitute a quality legal publication and thus requires an Editorial Board to manage its creation. While the composition of an Editorial Board can be diverse and tailored to the needs of each Law Review, it is obvious that one officer does not make up a board. Before establishing a Law Review, an ELSA Group must consider how many human resources will be required for the editorial process and how they will be allocated without prejudice to other Key Area projects the group is organising.

Finally, **a Law Review requires submissions** and an ELSA Group must therefore assess whether it is able to gather enough quality legal writing on a given topic to sustain a Law Review. This will come down to the pool of potential authors, which refers to how many people are eligible to submit legal writing for publication in the Law Review. Law Reviews within ELSA sometimes set excessively narrow criteria which curtails the size of this pool. Since only a percentage of those within the pool of potential authors will submit legal work for consideration, a Law Review should aim to have as large of pool as possible. Consider the following examples:

- Local Group A is based at a small university and establishes a Law Review which only accepts submissions from paid ELSA members at their university. In this case, the pool of potential authors is likely no more than 150 law students. If there is another Law Review already established at the same university, it will be even tougher to run a successful publication with such a small pool of potential authors.
- Local Group B is also based at a small university and establishes a Law Review. Although it has criteria that submissions will only be eligible if they comply with the topic and are written in English, there are no restrictions on who the authors are. In this case, the pool of potential authors is unlimited. As long as the call for submissions is well advertised, it will be much simpler to successfully run the Law Review of Local Group B than the Law Review of Local Group A.

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3. Blueprinting a Law Review

Guiding Questions: How is a Law Review structured? What are the internal rules of a Law Review? What are the functions of an Editorial Board and why is it necessary? What types of legal writing does a Law Review publish and how long should the submissions be?

Chapters 1 and 2 have demonstrated that a Law Review requires an infrastructure to be published and sustained. A number of key decisions need to be made right at the point of establishing a project if it is to be successful in the long-run. The purpose of this Chapter is to provide blueprint of the decisions that need to be made and the different options available in the design of a new Law Review.

3.1 Naming the Law Review

"The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their proper name."

Chinese proverb

When setting the name of the Law Review, the aim should be that it somehow evokes the identity and purpose of the publication. This can be done in many ways e.g. by referencing the topic of the publication, the name of the establishing ELSA Group, or by referring to the identity of the intended authors. Also consider that since Law Reviews typically have long names, in practice they are often known only through their abbreviations (especially when they are cited in other publications). The following is a list of examples of Law Reviews established within ELSA:

- **ELSA Law Review (ELR)** – the name refers to the identity of the publication as the official Law Review of the European Law Students' Association. The publication is commonly referred to by its initials.
- **Student Comparative and European Law Review (SCELR)** – the name refers to the identity of the publication as a Law Review publishing academic work by students on the topics of comparative law and European law. The publication is most commonly referred to by its abbreviations which is read as a single word.
- **ELSA Malta Law Review (EMLR)** – the name refers to the identity of the publication as the official Law Review of ELSA Malta. The abbreviation is primarily used for citation purposes.

Like with other Key Area projects within ELSA, the name of the publication should create an attraction for participation in the project and it should also aim to distinguish it from other similar projects. Since Law Reviews aim to be publications of prestige and good repute, this should be kept in mind when deciding on a name.

It is also important to remember that there are hundreds of law journals already established across the world and the name of a new Law Review must be unique. For an English language Law Review, the Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations can be browsed to ascertain whether a name is already in use for a legal publication.

It can be even more challenging to set an abbreviation for a Law Review which is not already in use. Since the abbreviation is the reference used to refer to a Law Review in citations in subsequent

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legal sources, it is important that a unique and identifiable abbreviation is selected. The Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations is also helpful in verifying which abbreviations are already in use.

3.2 Deciding on the Topic

It is possible for a Law Review to have no topic beyond publishing academic papers on any area of law. However, if a Law Review is to have a cohesive identity and a purpose, it is generally recommended for it to have a topic. While the topic for each individual issue of the Law Review may be decided by the relevant Editorial Board, it may be more advantageous for the publication to have a either an overarching or a core topic. For example, the topic of the ELSA Law Review is human rights law, but the International Council Meeting Decision Book permits the Editorial Board to set an additional topic for each issue. Furthermore, a Law Review may have an overarching topic of European Law, but it may set different topics within that field for its different issues, e.g. comparative European law, European Union law, European trade law, European human rights law, etc.

If a topic is set for the publication as a whole, it is important for it not to be so general that it defeats the purpose of having a topic but also not so narrow that it substantially reduces the number of potential submissions. If a topic identifies a specific field of law (e.g. contract law, criminal law, constitutional law) it is probably not too general, however it is typically a greater concern that a topic is set too narrow. The following are examples:

- The topic of *the law on the freedom of assembly* is probably too narrow to sustain an entire Law Review for multiple volumes. Broader topics such as *human rights law* or *civil rights law* would likely be better.
- The topic of *the law on market abuse* is probably too narrow to sustain an entire Law Review for multiple volumes. Broader topics such as *commercial law* or *financial law* would likely be better.
- The topic of *space law* is a developing field of law which is very interesting, however it is probably too novel to sustain an entire Law Review for multiple volumes. If an Editorial Board wants to feature it in its publication, it may consider launching an essay competition on the topic to feature an article in an upcoming issue.

3.3 Editorial Policy and Internal Rules

3.3.1 Language

A Law Review may publish legal writing in a single language, or it may publish legal writing in more languages. Some reputable international law journals publish legal writing for example in English and French. A Swedish law journal may accept submissions in any of the Nordic languages. The language of the Law Review may seem like a simple decision however it is important to consider the fact that it has ramifications. The Editorial Board must be competent to edit submissions in this language, both substantive and linguistic editing. For these purposes, it is not recommended that a Law Review accept submissions in a language in which a majority of the Editorial Board is fluent or near-fluent (Proficient user according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). It is also optimal (although not essential) that the same partner institution conducts the peer-review of the entire contents of the Law Review in order to ensure qualitative cohesion. If a Law Review publishes contributions in multiple languages, it is less likely that the same partner institution can perform the peer-review for all the contents of the Law Review which will necessitate foresight for ensuring that the different language contributions are edited and peer-reviewed to the same editorial and academic standards.

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Where relevant, it may be suitable to explain further if a certain variation of a language is adopted as the language of a Law Review. For example, the language of the ELSA Law Review is British English. This means that papers published in the ELSA Law Review must use British English spelling and punctuation styles in lieu of the American English counterparts. For purposes of the linguistic coherence of a publication, it is recommended that the Editorial Board of a Law Review adopt a Language Manual which sets out the linguistic preferences of the publication. For information purposes, the ELSA Law Review Language Manual can be accessed on the publication's website.

3.3.2 Types of papers and word count

When establishing a Law Review it is important to keep in mind what kind of legal writing that publication will feature. The following are the four main types of papers which Law Reviews typically publish:

- **Articles** – scholarly research papers of various lengths. Articles typically seek to answer a single defined research question with the answer being conveyed through an argument supported by sourced evidence that is communicated in a structured manner.
- **Case Notes** – scholarly papers which are shorter than articles which analyse a judicial case. A case note will typically identify the issues which a court had to address, analyse the judgment the court came to, and assess the potential impact of the ruling and its significance.
- **Letters to the Editor** – A Letter to the Editor may be written in direct response to a previously published paper in the Law Review or it may be a paper on a field within the topic of the Law Review that is of "general interest" but does not meet the standard of an Article in its own right.
- **Book Review** – A book review is a paper the purpose of which is to present an academic critique of a recently published book relevant to a field of law. A book review typically covers the contents of the books and relays the arguments of the book's author, the quality of which are then assessed, and counterarguments presented if appropriate.

It is at the discretion of each Law Review to decide which types of papers they will publish, however it is most common that at least articles and case notes are accepted for consideration. An Editorial Board will further have to decide what the parameters of the different kinds of papers' word counts will be. It is routine for a Law Review both to decide on a minimum and a maximum word count and those word counts will typically be different depending on the kinds of papers. For informational purposes, the following are the applicable word counts of the ELSA Law Review as prescribed by the International Decision Book of ELSA:

- *"Articles submitted must be between 2,500 and 7,500 words including footnotes and appendices;*
- *Case notes submitted must be between 1,000 and 4,000 words including footnotes and appendices; and*
- *Letters to the editor must be between 1,000 and 2,000 words including footnotes and appendices"*

3.3.3 Referencing

A Law Review is intended to be a high-quality scholarly publication that has been subjected to peer-review. As such, it needs to set rigorous standards as to the citation of sources which apply to all its contents. There are a variety of citation styles in use worldwide including those of the

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American Psychological Association (APA), the Modern Language Association (MLA) and the Chicago style. Each style has its own rules as to how sources must be cited. It is at the discretion of each Editorial Board to decide which citation style a Law Review adopts; however, it must be ensured that the entire contents of the Law Review are referenced in conformity with that style.
The ELSA Law Review has adopted the Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) as its citation style, which has also been adopted by many universities as their preferred citation style for academic work. OSCOLA is useful because it is designed for use in legal papers and thus has a defined style for various kinds of legal sources. OSCOLA is also a footnote based citation style, which makes it suitable for a Law Review which normally requires that all referencing be contained in footnotes.

The 4th edition of OSCOLA can be accessed here and the OSCOLA Quick Reference Guide can be accessed here.

3.3.4 Plagiarism Policy

Academic quality standards necessitate that a Law Review must be publishing the original work of the author. No publication of good repute tolerates plagiarism in any form, and it is important for a new publication to consider how it will prevent the publication of plagiarised work. Acknowledging the limited resources of a student-run publication to verify the originality of submissions received, this Handbook recommends that all Law Reviews within ELSA adopt their own Plagiarism Policy and introduce the condition in their submission forms that authors self-certify their compliance with that policy. A Plagiarism Policy can lay out what conduct the Editorial Board considers to amount to plagiarism or academic dishonesty, what the obligations of the author are towards the Editorial Board in terms of compliance with the Plagiarism Policy, and what actions the Editorial Board can take to prevent or remedy the publication of plagiarised materials. As a minimum, this Handbook recommends that Editorial Boards verify that all sources cited in a submission can be located and assess whether a submission contains any unsourced attributions from the work of another author.

The ELSA Law Review Plagiarism Policy is available as a template to other Law Reviews within ELSA which seek to adopt their own policies. The policy can be accessed here.

3.3.5 Technical standards

Garamond or Times New Roman? Indentation or no indentation? Wide or narrow margins? Whatever the question, a Law Review must have an answer. In order to be a cohesive publication, the layout style must be uniform from the first to the last page. These rules are not only important for the author to ensure that the format in which they submit their submission is in compliance with the rules of the publication, but for the Editorial Board to ensure that the layout of the Law Review is coherent across the different issues.

An Editorial Board sets these standards for the publication and compiles the relevant rules into a document which is referred to as a Style Guide. The Style Guide should be available to authors so that the submission can be delivered to the Law Review in conformity with the technical standards. For information purposes, the Style Guide of the ELSA Law Review can be accessed here.

3.4 Editorial Board and the Division of Tasks

As was touched upon in subchapter 2.4, the work of compiling and publishing the Law Review is carried out by the Editorial Board. The members of the Editorial Board are called the Editors, but

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within that role they may carry out very different functions depending on the sophistication and ambition of the publication. Regardless of the size of the Law Review or its Editorial Board, the following are the types of editorial tasks which must be completed:

- **Content Editing** – this refers to the editorial work as it pertains to the substance of the submissions received and their selection for publication. An Editor responsible for content editing will be responsible for reviewing the submissions received and assessing whether they are suitable for publication. The process of content editing will typically involve the shortlisting of submissions for publication, which are then sent for peer-review with the academic partner. The process may also involve assessing the compliance of the submissions with the linguistic and technical standards of the Law Review, to help the Editors responsible for linguistic and technical editing ascertain the extent of editing required.
- **Technical Editing** – this refers to the editorial work as it pertains to compliance with the technical standards of the Law Review. An Editor responsible for technical editing will typically be charged with taking the submissions after peer-review and performing the layout work. This will require scrutiny of the submissions selected for publishing and cross-referencing with the Law Review's Style Guide. Importantly, technical editing encompasses verification of a submission's compliance with the Law Review's citation style.
- **Linguistic Editing** – this refers to the editorial work as it pertains to compliance with the linguistic standards of the Law Review. If the Law Review has adopted a Language Manual, linguistic editing can focus on ensuring compliance with that manual.

The composition of the Editorial Board should be structured around these three core tasks. The tasks should also be divided between editors and organised to secure the most efficient use of resources. For example, content editing is typically superficial, but it needs to be done on every submission received whereas technical and linguistic editing is more 'hands on' in nature but is only necessary for the submissions that will be published. It follows that content editing should be done before and not concurrently with technical and linguistic editing.

The division of tasks between Editors in an Editorial Board depends on the number of potential team members and the expected workload of the team. For example, if an Editorial Board expects 50 submissions of which it may publish 10 contributions, it will probably require 2-3 Editors to perform content editing, 1 Editor to perform linguistic editing and 1 Editor to perform technical editing.

In addition to the editorial work that has already been mentioned, an Editorial Board will need an Editor-in-Chief who will be chiefly responsible for project management. The Editor-in-Chief must set the project timeline, coordinate the timeline with relevant publishing and academic partners, delegate the tasks between the Editors and ensure they meet those deadlines. The Editor-in-Chief will also be responsible for the external relations of the Law Review (insofar as that responsibility has been delegated by the ELSA board responsible for the publication), unless they decide to assign those responsibilities to other positions, e.g. a Publication Editor. An Editor-in-Chief may take on responsibility for the editorial work of a board, however this Handbook recommends that this Editor devote their efforts to the successful management of the Editorial Board.

3.5 Securing an Academic Partner

As Chapter 1 and subchapter 3.3 both raised the importance of the peer-review as an indispensable part in the process of publishing a Law Review. For professionally published journals, peer-review

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is typically solicited from experts relevant to the field the submitted paper addresses. For a Law Review within ELSA, peer-review is most commonly performed by an Academic Partner recruited to support the publication in that capacity. The Academic Partner will receive the shortlisted submissions and ensure that the work of a peer-review is conducted in a manner that conforms to the academic standards of a scholarly publication. An Academic Partner will typically be institutional such as a Law Department and will therefore have the capacity to divide the submissions between the professors it employs.

The relationship with an Academic Partner is important to sustain because without a partner committed to performing the peer-review, the publication cannot be published as a Law Review. The Editor-in-Chief must therefore ensure that the relationship is maintained on good terms, that the timeline for each peer-review is agreed upon in advance and the deadlines are respected by the Editorial Board, and that any terms of the Academic Partnership are fulfilled. It is therefore advisable that an ELSA Group planning to establish a Law Review make arrangements for the publication's Academic Partner without delay.

3.6 Project Timeline

Chapter 1 and subchapter 2.4 both stressed the importance of the fact that a Law Review is a periodical. This is so quintessential to the character of a Law Review that it can be asserted that a publication which possesses all the characteristics of a Law Review save that of being a periodical, will not constitute a Law Review. As a result, an important question which must be answered by anyone establishing a Law Review within ELSA is: how regularly will it be published?

A Law Review may be published on any different kind of regular basis (e.g. quarterly, annually, semi-annually, biennially), but it must be published on that regular basis. In light of the workload associated with publishing a Law Review and the other commitments an ELSA Group may have alongside it, in most cases an Editorial Board will decide to publish one issue of the Law Review annually. Nevertheless, any readers of this Handbook should not be discouraged from aiming for publishing more frequently because the bulk of the work lies in the competent structuring of the project timeline.

An Editorial Board may choose to formalise the project timeline in the form of a Publication Cycle, however regardless of how official the project timeline is, it must be created at the beginning of the project and it must be followed. If a project timeline is not followed, the Editorial Board risks derailing the publication of the Law Review within the duration of its term, which may have knock-on effects for the succeeding Editorial Board.

The following is an indicator of the different phases that a project timeline must take into account, along with suggestions for the time necessary to complete the steps. It is intended as a template which can be adopted by Law Reviews within ELSA to support their project management.

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4. Finding Submissions

Guiding Questions: Where are you going to source submissions from? How are submissions sent in? How do you make potential authors aware of the call for submissions?

There can be no Law Review without submissions. Therefore, it is essential that the call for submissions in advance of each issue of a Law Review should be well organised and advertised so as to make sure that as large of a sample as possible of the pool of potential authors is aware that the call is open. Remember that the world is full of law students and young lawyers who would like for their academic legal writing to be published. If a call for submissions does not yield enough contributions, it does not mean that there is insufficient interest in the Law Review, it means that the call for submissions was not properly advertised.

Some might believe that the only way to advertise a Call for Submission is to publish a post on Facebook with the deadline and see what comes in. Much like sticking a flyer onto a public pinboard, this is an unreliable promotional tactic since its distribution is so general it is difficult to know who is and who is not being made aware of the call for submissions. Social media outlets should of course feature as complementary tools in a promotional campaign for a call for submissions, but there are a variety of other methods that are more successful in reaching a Law Review's target group directly. The purpose of this chapter is to assist with the planning of a call for submissions, identifying where submissions should be sourced from and how potential authors can be made aware of the call for submissions.

4.1 Identifying the Target Groups

Firstly, it is important to identify who the Target Groups for the publication are. For a Law Review within ELSA this will typically be the following categories of authors, with the list being presented in the order of how likely they are to submit legal writing to the publication:

- **Postgraduate Law Students** – students who are completing a postgraduate law degree, such as an LL.M or equivalent, are the most fruitful target group for a Law Review. These students will typically have extensive experience with legal writing due to the coursework they have completed at undergraduate level, and their postgraduate coursework should also require them to produce academic legal writing. As a result, postgraduate law students will usually have an existing portfolio of legal writing and would only need to select a piece they have already written to submit for publication.
- **Undergraduate Law Students** – students who are completing an undergraduate law degree, such as an LL.B. or equivalent, are also a reliable source of submissions for a Law Review. The degree to which legal writing forms an integral part of an undergraduate law student's studies depends on the jurisdiction in which they undertake their legal education, however in most European countries legal writing forms obligatory coursework to at least some extent. Undergraduate law students will be less experienced than postgraduate law students in legal writing, but they also tend to be more enthusiastic about the prospect of having their work published.
- **Young lawyers** – recent graduates who are launching their careers in the legal profession are likely to want to continue to enhance their academic and professional credentials alongside their jobs. Publication in a Law Review is an ideal opportunity for such young professionals to gain a publication credit, either by publishing original legal work or academic writing they produced while in university. For a Law Review within ELSA based

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in a law faculty, finding a route to make young lawyers aware of a call for submissions can be a goldmine.

- **PhD candidates** – candidates undertaking a PhD usually have their hands full with their multi-year research project which they would normally seek to have published as a book. This means that a PhD candidate is less likely than both undergraduate and postgraduate law students to devote time to drafting an original submission for a Law Review. Nevertheless, it is possible that, like with postgraduate law students, they have a portfolio of previously unpublished legal writing from which they can draw to find submissions. It also happens that PhD candidates publish some of their research in the form of a journal article prior to completing their thesis, although this is unlikely to be common for a Law Review within ELSA.
- **Partners** – if the ELSA Group with which a Law Review is associated has institutional partners or if the Law Review itself has such partners, it may be that the partner wants to have legal writing from someone within that institution published to showcase their scholarly credentials. Submissions received from a partner are usually negotiated in advance and not received through the call for submissions.
- **Legal Community** – these are the people who spot a Facebook post floating across the worldwide web and decide to send in a submission. It could also be a submission received from an academic at the university where the Law Review is based, who wants to support the publication. While these submissions can be welcomed, they are less reliable than the other target groups in terms of securing submissions.

Having listed the different Target Groups from which a Law Review within ELSA will source their submissions; the following subchapters will outline different promotional strategies which should be employed in order to maximise the potential number of submissions. Importantly, these different strategies are not different options, but should all be used in combination to form a single, successful submission strategy.

4.2 Targeting the Target Groups: Direct Communication and Outreach

"If the mountain will not come to Muhammad, Muhammad must go to the mountain."

Proverb attributed to Francis Bacon

This subchapter's guiding proverb could serve as a stand-in for what a successful Law Review's call for submission achieves. An Editorial Board cannot expect that law students will wait in droves to send in their submission as soon as the call opens, it must bring the call directly to the law students. For some reason, ELSA Groups tend to shy away from direct communication and outreach efforts, which they only do to their own detriment since efforts of this kind are proven to be the most effective in securing submissions. There are three main ways to execute a direct communication and outreach strategy and these are the following: **email communication with University professors**, **email communication with Law Departments,** and **direct presentations for law students.**

4.2.1 Email communication with University professors

What better way to reach students than through their professors? As stated previously, a Law Review seeks to promote itself as a project of academic prestige which will bring academic and

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professional advantages to those who participate in it. Then who better to deliver that message directly to students than their own University professor?

Professors, lectures, seminar leaders and others who take part in teaching law to students at undergraduate and postgraduate level are always happy to advertise opportunities that will be of advantage to their students. As a result, a very successful strategy to bring a call for submissions to the direct attention of students is for the Editorial Board to send an email to University teachers telling them about the Law Review, what the topic is, what kinds of submissions are accepted (and emphasising that university coursework is accepted), explain that the publication is peer-reviewed and professionally published, and most importantly what the deadline is. The professor can then forward this information directly to their students without any extra work for them – making this a very easy way to reach your primary target groups.

As an example, below is a template email based off of the emails used by the ELSA Network to promote the call for submissions for the 2020 issue of the ELSA Law Review:

> *Dear [Name],*
>
> *I am contacting you in my capacity as [Role] at [National/Local Group]. The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) at [Location of ELSA Group] has recently opened the Call for Submissions for the [year] issue of the ELSA Law Review. The ELSA Law Review traces its origins back to 1989 and serves as a platform for young legal minds, and especially law students, to contribute to current legal debates by publishing their first article in a peer-reviewed journal. I am promoting this opportunity to students at [University name] and I was wondering if you would share information about the Call for Submissions with your students?*
>
> *The ELR accepts articles, case notes and letters to the editor concerning [topic]. The editorial board takes a broad approach to assessing conformity with the topics because the primary aim is to publish high quality, creative and critical contributions to academic legal thought.*
>
> - *The call for submissions is open until* ***[Date]****.*
> - *The Law Review is peer-reviewed in partnership with [Academic Partner].*
> - *The ELR is published in both a digital format and in print in partnership with [Publishing Partner].*
>
> *More information about the submission criteria may be found in the attached information document to this email and at [Law Review Website]. Interested students can always get in touch with me with any questions by email at [Email].*
>
> *Thank you in advance.*
>
> *Kind regards,*
> *[Your Name]*
> *[Your Position]*

Although the above email was designed for the ELSA Law Review, it can very easily be adjusted to promote the call for submissions of any other Law Review within ELSA.

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A Law Review based at a Local Group should aim to send emails to **at least** all the professors who teach law courses relevant to the topic of the Law Review. Ideally, it should draw up a list of professors teaching at other universities in the same country and ask them to promote the project with their students. Likewise, a Law Review based at a National Group should aim to send emails to **at least** all the professors who teach law courses relevant to the topic of the Law Review at the universities in that country where ELSA is established. Ideally, emails should be sent to professors at all universities in the country and outreach efforts to universities abroad should also be considered. Keep in mind that the applicable external relations and partnership rules of ELSA must always be respected, but these are rarely a hindrance to the promotion of a Law Review.

4.2.2 Email communication with Law Departments

Similar to communicating with University professors, sending emails to a representative of a University Law Department asking them to communicate information about a Law Review to their entire student body is an excellent way to ensure that the call for submissions is distributed as widely as possible. Whereas communicating directly with a course professor ensures that you reach students whose studies directly correspond to the topic of the Law Review, communication to a Law Department's mailing list secures wider distribution to a larger and more general type of law students.

As before, an example is provided that has been used for a 2020 Call for Submissions for the ELSA Law Review, which can easily be adjusted to fit any other Law Review within ELSA:

Dear [Name],
I am contacting you in my capacity as [Role] at [National/Local Group]. The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) at [Location] has recently opened the Call for Submissions for the [year] issue of the ELSA Law Review. The ELSA Law Review traces its origins back to 1989 and serves as a platform for young legal minds, and especially law students, to contribute to current legal debates by publishing their first article in a peer-reviewed journal. I am promoting this opportunity to students at [University name] and I was wondering if you would share information about the Call for Submissions with the law student mailing lists? Students at all stages of their university careers are encouraged to submit their work, so I would appreciate if you would be willing to forward this email and the attached information to both undergraduate and postgraduate students.
The ELR accepts articles, case notes and letters to the editor concerning [topic]. The editorial board takes a broad approach to assessing conformity with the topics because the primary aim is to publish high quality, creative and critical contributions to academic legal thought.

- *The call for submissions is open until* ***[Date]****.*
- *The Law Review is peer-reviewed in partnership with [Academic Partner].*
- *The ELR is published in both a digital format and in print in partnership with [Publishing Partner].*

More information about the submission criteria may be found in the attachment to this email and at [Website]. Interested students can always get in touch with me with any questions by email at [Email].

Thank you in advance.

Kind regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]

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While at an absolute minimum, an email of this type should be sent out to the Law Department(s) corresponding to the Local Group(s) where the Law Review is based. However, it is highly recommended for the Editorial Board to gather a long list of Law Departments and send information emails to as many faculties as possible. Keep in mind that the applicable external relations and partnership rules of ELSA must always be respected, but these are rarely a hindrance to the promotion of a Law Review.

4.2.3 Direct Presentations to Law Students

In addition to effective email communication to law students across many Law Departments, it is highly recommended to harness the power of the ELSA Network by having officers locally giving brief oral presentations to law students about the call for submissions of a Law Review, for example in advance of university lectures.
An example of this kind of presentation can also be drawn from the vault of the ELSA Law Review, with another example of the promotion of the 2020 call for submissions:

> *My name is [Your Name] and I am [Your Role] of [Your Local/National Group]. I'm here to inform you of your opportunity to be published in a peer-reviewed international law review published across 44 countries.*
>
> *The ELSA Law Review has opened the Call for Submissions for its [Year] issue and it is open until* ***[Date]****. The issue will publish English-language articles, case notes and letters to the editor on the topics of [topic]. These topics are broad so as long as you can make the argument that your submission concerns either one, then it will be considered for publication.*
>
> *Originally published in 1989, the ELSA Law Review is a unique opportunity for law students and young lawyers to gain recognition early in their careers by being internationally published in a law journal which has real international exposure. It is published both online and in print, and ELSA works with its partners to make it accessible on legal publication databases. This means that publication in the ELSA Law Review not only impacts your CV, but it also contributes to ongoing legal debates because it is readily accessible to academics, legal professionals and students.*
>
> *So, are you thinking that you would like to submit something but you're too busy to write an article because of the coursework you already have to do? Why not submit some of the university essays you've already poured your heart and soul into and see about publishing it? With some quick editing work by you, that module essay is potentially transformed into a peer-reviewed article in a law review.*
>
> *The best thing is that submitting something to the ELSA Law Review is* ***incredibly easy and takes less than two minutes****. Just go to* ***[website]*** *and fill in the online submission form before* ***[Date]****. If you think your work might require some polishing before it is submitted, then you can also find some tools to do that on that website including Authors' Guidelines, a Style Guide, a Language Manual and a Plagiarism Policy.*
>
> *If you are interested in receiving further information or have any questions, just go to* ***[website]*** *for answers to all your questions or email me at [Your email].*

4.3 Covering All Bases: Supplementary Promotional Strategies

While direct communication and outreach efforts form the core of a successful promotional strategy for a Law Review, they should always be supplemented with the use of other

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communication tools which an Editorial Board has as its disposal such as social media. The number of different potential strategies for supplementary promotion are endless and will depend on the environment in which the relevant Law Review is established, this handbook recommends three specific tools which can be employed by any Law Review within ELSA and which can be successful if correctly applied. These three supplementary promotional strategies are: **Facebook promotion**, **LinkedIn promotion**, and the **ELSA Mailing Lists.**

4.3.1 Facebook

Facebook is the world's largest social media platform with more than 2.5 billion users globally. Most ELSA Groups have chosen Facebook as their main web platform through which they communicate opportunities to existing and prospective members. It is recommended to use Facebook to promote information about a call for submissions and this can be done in the form of informative posts containing details about the call and reasons for submitting legal writing in the ELSA Law Review. This can be both an effective strategy to bring information to people who have not heard about the Law Review through direct marketing efforts and it can also remind those who have already received such information about the call and the submission deadline. For information purposes, examples of Facebook advertising used by the ELSA Law Review for its 2020 Call for Submissions are provided:

4.3.2 LinkedIn

If Facebook is the 21st century's rendition of the phonebook, then LinkedIn is the yellow pages. This social media platform aimed at professional networking is a useful tool for an ELSA Group to use to complement its Facebook promotion since content posted there reaches a more targeted (but smaller) audience who will be in the search for opportunities for self-development. It is possible for each Law Review to have its own LinkedIn profile as an 'employer' or it can be promoted through the profile of the ELSA Group (an important tip is to remember that neither ELSA Groups nor Law Reviews should have 'personal' profiles on LinkedIn as this appears less professional). While the same posts can be used for both Facebook and LinkedIn promotion, it is recommended to tailor the content of a LinkedIn post to the professional-oriented setting of that environment. Further, as the LinkedIn algorithm is tailored to promote opportunities widely to the relevant professional network, the use of hashtags is encouraged. Specifically with LinkedIn promotion, the Editorial Board members should use their own accounts on LinkedIn to share posts pertaining to the Call for Submissions with their own networks on the platform as this has proven to be effective in wide distribution. This is also of course encouraged for other types of social media promotion, however in the case of LinkedIn it can be used most effectively due to the nature of the platform and because it is also to benefit of the Editorial Board members to share that they have taken up an editorial position.

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4.3.3 ELSA Mailing Lists

The greatest strength of ELSA is that it is one united network that connects many tens of thousands of members across a continent. When establishing a Law Review within ELSA, the power of this enormous network should of course be harnessed to make sure a call for submissions is distributed as widely as possible. The best way to achieve this is to send an email to the network-wide ELSA Mailing Lists with information about the call for submissions. In such an email, all the information about the call can be provided along with the eligibility criteria for submissions, which the Editorial Board can request that the relevant National and Local Group officers receiving the email make available to their members.

The value of adopting all of the three aforementioned supplementary promotional strategies is that each of them reaches a wide but most likely a different audience. While the direct communication and outreach efforts will ensure that the target groups which are the likeliest to send submissions for publication are well aware of the call for submissions, the supplementary promotional strategies are effective in covering all bases to ensure that a broader range of those target groups have the general information made available to them.

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5. The Editorial Process

Guiding Questions: How do you structure the editorial process to fit within a deadline? How do you structure the editorial process to be most efficient with your resources? How do you allocate tasks between Editorial Board members? Who conducts the peer-review?

The successful delivery by an Editorial Board of an edited Law Review hinges on the effectiveness and the efficiency of the editorial process. It is even the case with most professional law journal publications that members of the Editorial Board work on a volunteer basis and must juggle their obligations to the publication with other professional commitments. Subchapter 3.4 already touched upon the nature of the Editorial Board's work and the division of tasks which must be completed but in sequence and concurrently, which subchapter 3.6 also illustrated. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the different stages which will unfold in the process it takes for submissions to be transformed into a publication.

As was stressed in subchapter 3.6, the editorial process must be foreseen in advance and it should be structured in accordance with deadlines. It is useful to formalise these deadlines into a Publication Cycle which binds the hands of the Editorial Board and provides a clear timeline which the Editorial Board can foresee before its term commences. As the editorial process requires the involvement of an external partner at least for the peer-review, it is necessary to negotiate the timeline for the entire project in advance and to respect all internal deadlines to avoid a potential failure to meet the deadlines agreed with a partner. As the graphic in subchapter 3.6 has already made suggestions as to the time required for the different steps, the focus of this chapter will be to outline what must be completed at each stage and provide guidance as to how it can be completed successfully.

5.1 Blinding of Submissions

In order to eliminate potential biases in the editorial process, it is important that submissions should be double blinded. That means that the Editors performing content editing do not know the identity of the authors of the submissions they review, and neither do the authors know which Editors will perform the content editing on their submissions.

Blinding is an easy process in practice that requires that before the submission is made available to the Editorial Board, all indicators of the identity of the author must be removed. An important tip to remember is that where submissions are written in Microsoft Word, the program will record the Microsoft username of the author and store it in the file. It can therefore be necessary to copy the contents of the submission and transfer them to a separate document in order to remove all traces of the author's identity.

5.2 Shortlisting of Submissions

Once the deadline of the call for submissions has elapsed, the Editors responsible for content editing need to sift through the submissions received and conclude which of them may be suitable for publication. This requires that all submissions received need to be read with a critical eye to assess the extent to which they match the profile of the Law Review. This refers not only to the conformity of the paper to the topic of the publication, but also to the quality of its argument, structure, referencing and other qualitative criteria the Editorial Board may set.

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A Law Review should aim to receive approximately 100 submissions for each issue it publishes, and as a result content editing can appear burdensome since it necessitates that each submission be scrutinised by the Editorial Board. However, in practice this can be structured in a way which finds a balance between performing high-quality content editing and using available resources efficiently.

Since the Editors conduct a qualitative and not a quantitative review, the criteria are subjective and the scoring can thus be unfair if they are applied unevenly. The simplest way to avoid an uneven application of scoring criteria is of course that all Editors perform a review of all submissions and their scores are combined or averaged. If a Law Review has received close to 100 submissions, however, this will likely not be feasible in practice. The following practices may be considered to promote harmony in the content editing:

- **Common understanding of criteria** – It is highly recommended that all Editors involved have a meeting to ensure they have a common understanding of the evaluation criteria prior to the shortlisting process commencing. This could for example be done by having all Editors review a sample submission and provide their scores, then discuss the variations between their scoring and try to set common benchmarks for the different scores.
- **Multiple editor review** – Although having all Editors review all submissions may not be feasible, it is likewise far from optimal to only assign each submission to one Editor. This handbook recommends that the submissions be divided so that each submission is edited by between 2-3 Editors. In combination with efforts to promote a common understanding of the criteria, the averaging or combination of the scores given by the multiple Editors to each submission should produce balanced assessments of all the submissions to allow for shortlisting of those worthy of publication.

The actual content editing should be superficial in nature and should not involve any actual editing of the submission. This handbook recommends that the Editorial Board have a Submission Review Form which is filled out by each Editor after having read the submission. Scoring can either be done by having the Editor assess certain aspects of the submission and decide whether or not it meets the criteria of the Law Review or a scoring scale can be used (for example awarding scores between 1-5).

The following pages contain two examples of a Submission Review Form which can be used by a Law Review Editorial Board to conduct the shortlisting of submissions. Both these forms are available alongside this handbook on the Officers' Portal of ELSA.

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Sample Submission Review Form 1

SUBMISSION REVIEW FORM

Editor Performing Review:

Title of the Submission:

Type of Submission (highlight one): Article / Case Note / Letter to the Editor

Submission Identification Number:

FINAL RECOMMENDATION *(to be filled at the end of the review)*

☐ YES	☐ NO
The submission satisfactorily meets the relevant standard and requires no or minor edits before publishing.	*Submission clearly does not meet relevant standard and would require significant edits to its substance and/or structure to be published.*

Comments:

(Use this space to support your recommendation in a few sentences.)

LAW REVIEW SPECIFIC GUIDELINES CHECKBOX
(Use this checkbox to check if the author has complied with the guidelines specific to your law review.)
☐ [...]
☐ [...]
☐ [...]
☐ [...]
Other comments:

CONTENT CHECKBOX
☐ Topic of the article falls within the broader topic of the law review.
☐ There is a clear and interesting thesis.
☐ Topic is well-researched and the article is well-developed.
☐ The article is novel, in arguments, perspectives, conclusions and/or recommendations.
☐ The article is engaging.
Other comments:

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STRUCTURE AND FORMATTING CHECKBOX
☐ Title and abstract reflect the content of the article.
☐ The article is divided into clear sections (introduction, main body, conclusion).
☐ The structure of the article is coherent (sentences and paragraphs follow logically).
☐ The article complies with formatting requirements.
Other comments:

LANGUAGE STYLE CHECKBOX
☐ Language of the article is clear, with no or minor spelling and/or grammatical errors.
☐ There is a consistent use of non-discriminatory and gender neutral language.
☐ The level of professional language is satisfactorily met.
Other comments:

PLAGIARISM AND REFERENCING CHECKBOX
☐ References and bibliography reflect the content of the article.
☐ All references in the article are genuine.
☐ 'Green light' on plagiarism software *(if applicable)*.
Other comments:

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Since the submissions are blinded, they need to be identified by a number during the selection process.

The form provides that the Editor decide whether or not a submission should be recommended for publication. If a high number of submissions is recommended for publication, then the Editorial Board will need to select between those submissions.

These fields can be adjusted to account for additional criteria set by the Law Review using the Form.

The form can be used to foresee the degree of linguistic editing necessary already at the shortlisting stage.

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Sample Submission Review Form 2

Submissions Review Form

Editor Performing Review:

Title of the Submission:

Type of Submission (highlight one): Article / Case Note / Letter to the Editor

Submission Identification Number:

Since the submissions are blinded, they need to be identified by a number during the selection process.

Scoring Guide

1	2	3	4	5
Not Shortlisted. Submission clearly does not meet relevant standard and would require significant edits to its substance and/ or structure to be published.		**Potentially Shortlisted, requiring some edits.** Submission mostly meets the relevant standard but requires some edits. Submission may be shortlisted, but author would need to make relevant edits (either before or after peer-review based on context).		**Shortlisted, requiring minor edits.** The submission satisfactorily meets the relevant standard and requires only minor edits (by the author or editorial board based on context).

This review form relies on numerical scores from the Editors rather than a yes/no type recommendation. As a result, the scoring criteria are defined to ensure a common understanding among the Editorial Board.

Relevance of Submission

Guiding Questions	Score and General Comments
➢ Does the article **comply** with the topic of the Law Review? ➢ Is there a **clear and interesting thesis**? ➢ Does the author show a **good grasp** of the article topic, developing it with depth? If not, which parts should be complemented? ➢ Is the article **understandable** to a reader who isn't familiar with the topic? If not, which parts should be further explained? ➢ Does the article make an original contribution to the field, through **new arguments/ perspectives/ conclusions/ recommendations** on the topic? ➢ Will the article capture and maintain the **reader's attention**?	

The form does not contain checkboxes but instead guiding questions for the Editor to conclude on a score for each criteria field.

Structure and Style

Guiding Questions	Score and General Comments
➢ Does the article adhere to the **Style Guide**? ➢ Do the **title and abstract** reflect the contents of the article? ➢ Is there a **clear introduction, main body and conclusion**? ➢ Is there **coherence** to the sentences and paragraphs?	

The form can be used to foresee the degree of technical editing necessary already at the shortlisting stage.

Use of Language

Guiding Questions	Score and General Comments
➢ Is the use of language consistent with the recommendations of the **Language Manual**? ➢ Is there a consistent of use of **non-discriminatory and gender-neutral language**? ➢ Is the **English language and punctuation** consistently and accurately in the style of British English? ➢ Is the use of **British English in the standard and legal form** to a high enough standard expected for the Law Review? ➢ Is there a **logical flow and structure** in the language used?	

Referencing

Guiding Questions	Score and General Comments
➢ Does the submission cite sources in accordance with **OSCOLA**? ➢ Does the submission appear to be, in compliance with the Plagiarism Policy? ➢ Does the range of sources referenced **reflect** the submission?	

The form lays out specific questions to ensure that the style and quality of referencing is assessed thoroughly and taken into account.

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5.3 Peer-Review

Once the initial review of the submissions has been completed by the Editorial Board, it will need to draw up a shortlist of contributions to publish which will be sent to the Academic Partner of the Law Review for peer-review. If the review of the submissions has been done using numerical scoring (like Submission Review Form 2 does), the easiest way to decide on a shortlist is to select the submissions with the highest scores. In such a scenario, the Editorial Board should be clear on what score represents the threshold between the publishable and the non-publishable and ensure that nothing below that threshold is shortlisted. On the other hand, if the review of the submissions has been done by identifying whether each submission is recommended or not recommended for publication (like Submission Review Form 1 does), the Editorial Board will need to review all submissions which have been recommended for publication and narrow the total down to a shortlist.

The size of a Law Review's shortlist is at the discretion of the Editorial Board, but it should take into consideration the number of contributions that will be published. If the aim is to publish 10 contributions, the Editorial Board should consider shortlisting between 15 and 20 submissions. The Editorial Board should be mindful of only shortlisting submissions which are of high publishable quality so as not to waste the time of the peer-reviewers with submissions that do not meet the standards of the publication.

The Academic Partner decides how the peer-review is performed, however if the Editorial Board has strong opinions on the matter it can be discussed at the point of negotiating the partnership. Typically, the Academic Partner will return the submissions with general comments about its contents and then a verdict on whether it meets the standards of publication. As was touched upon in Chapter 1, the three types of verdicts given are typically:

a. The submission is suitable and acceptable for publication.
b. The submission is suitable and acceptable for publication with revisions.
c. The submission is neither suitable nor acceptable for publication.

The peer-review is not an advisory process, it is an essential element in the production of scholarly legal publication. Therefore, the verdict of the peer-review is to be followed by the Editorial Board which shall not override the decisions of the experts who have performed the review. Submissions in category (c) cannot be published in the Law Review and must therefore be rejected. Submissions in category (a) should be prioritised for publication and, if necessary, submissions in category (b) can be accepted for publication only if the revisions deemed necessary in peer-review are made. Once this process is concluded, the Editorial Board can move to finalise the contributions for publication.

5.4 Revisions by the Author

Following peer-review, the shortlisted authors should be informed if their submission will be published. As a courtesy to the authors whose submission has not been selected, the Editorial Board should consider sharing the feedback received from the peer-review so that the authors may perform the necessary improvements to their legal writing and try once more to have their work published. Authors whose submissions have been deemed suitable and acceptable for publication only with certain revisions should be given a deadline to perform those necessary revisions and it should be made clear to them that the publication of the submission is entirely contingent on the revisions being made. When the Editorial Board receives the revised submissions from the authors, it should verify that the edits made sufficiently address the critique received in the peer-review.

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This process can also be used to bring other aspects of the submissions chosen for publication in line with the editorial standards of the Law Review. In practice, it is rare that authors do extensive work at the time of submission to edit their contribution to bring it in line with the technical and linguistic standards of the publication. Although the Editorial Board is of course free to reject from consideration any submission which does not conform to the Law Review's Style Guide and Language Manual, in practice this is not a luxury afforded to many student-run publications. Instead, the Editorial Board may decide to provide an assessment of the extent to which edits are required in a selected submission for it to be published and to provide instructions for the author to make revisions alongside any revisions suggested in the peer-review. This is highly recommended since the more technical and linguistic editing the author does of their own submission, the less work is then required of the Editorial Board to make those changes for the author.

5.5 Linguistic and Technical Editing

Once the peer-reviewed submissions have been received back from the authors, the editorial work as it pertains to the content of the Law Review can be considered completed and the work of the Editors responsible for linguistic and technical editing will properly commence. As was mentioned in subchapter 3.6, the linguistic and technical editing is far more 'hands-on' than the content editing because the submission must be published in complete compliance with both the Law Review's Language Manual and its Style Guide.

As was explained in subchapter 5.4, it is recommended to have the author perform as much of their own technical and linguistic editing as possible to reduce the time it takes for the Editorial Board to conduct this work. The published Law Review and its contents will be the responsibility of the Editorial Board and errors in the publication which do not conform to the Style Guide or Language Manual will constitute failures of the Editorial Board.

To allow for the swift execution of this type of editing, it is recommended that the Editorial Board produce a master template for the Law Review in which they can set the necessary layout rules and insert the text of the submissions into that template. That will spare editing time with regards to page margins, font, font sizes, headings, indentations and other technical criteria.

It is incredibly important that the Editor(s) performing the technical editing are competent to review the quality of references and thoroughly review all footnotes within the Law Review during the technical editing process. The difference between a proper and an improper footnote can often rest in something as basic as a punctuation mark, which is why necessary care must be taken and nothing can be overlooked.

Once the linguistic and technical editing has been completed, there should be a coherent manuscript which can be sent to the publishing partner to be professionally typeset and published. If the Law Review lacks a publishing partner, this must be completed and foreseen by the Editorial Board.

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6. Publishing: Partnerships and Distribution

Guiding Questions: How are you publishing your Law Review: in print or online? Where will you publish the Law Review? Will the Law Review feature in any databases and libraries? Will you get an ISSN?

"If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?"

Philosophical thought experiment

Unlike some previous Chapters, this Chapter is not introduced by a proverb but by a thought experiment. The tree in the forest can be substituted for a Law Review. If the publishing process is not executed well, then what was the value of compiling the Law Review? The Editorial Board must remember that the purpose of the Law Review is not for a pile of papers to gather dust on a bookshelf but to help law students and young lawyers make a meaningful contribution to academic legal discussions. Therefore, the publishing process is of equal value as the editorial process in order for the Law Review to deliver its purpose.

The aim of this Chapter is to provide guidance on some of the main questions that relate to publishing a Law Review as well as practical examples where possible which may assist a new Law Review in securing its intended distribution.

6.1 Publishing Format: print or .pdf?

Most members of the legal community access academic literature digitally through their web browser. Publishing a Law Review online in the form of a pdf document is both easy and cost-effective as it avoids the more arduous process of a print-publishing process. This handbook recommends that all Law Reviews within ELSA should be published in a pdf format and made accessible online and distributed in that format.

However, that is not to say that print publication should not also be pursued. There is great value in publishing a Law Review in print: firstly, it augments the reputability of the publication, secondly it provides the authors and Editors with a physical manifestation of their hard work, and thirdly it can be distributed to partners of the relevant ELSA Group as an example of the work produced within the Association.

A Law Review may be published in print through two different means:

- **Partnership with publishing house** – having a Law Review published by a professional publisher is the ideal scenario. Legal publishing houses operate widely in Europe and publish professional law journals which they put up for sale in physical copies. An ELSA Group may be able to secure a partnership with such a publishing house through which the professional typesetting of the publication is handled by the partner who then puts the publication up for sale. The publisher will then acquire an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) for the Law Review, which is a prerequisite for most libraries and databases which might acquire the publication (both in print and digital formats).
    - **Wolf Publishers** – should you be interested in publishing your Law Review through ELSA's publishing partner, please contact the Vice President in charge of Academic Activities of the International Board of ELSA at academicactivities@elsa.org.

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- **Self-publication by Editorial Board** – an alternative option is for the Editorial Board to self-publish the Law Review. Although a fully feasible option, this is recommended only if a partnership with a publishing house is not viable. This requires that the Editorial Board ensure that the publication is typeset up to professional standards, contact a printer to print the Law Review, and most importantly raise the necessary funds to have the Law Review printed. This will also be more expensive since a publishing house will be able to print the Law Review as needed through their own printing facilities, whereas the Editorial Board will need to predetermine the number of copies needed and pay retail price for the printing.

6.2 Featuring in Libraries and Legal Databases

With a Law Review published in either a digital or print format, or both, the task of the Editorial Board becomes to ensure that the Law Review is distributed as widely as possible. The intention is for as many members of the legal community to find the publication without specifically looking for it. For this reason, although it is perfectly valid to publish the Law Review on the publication's website and promote that publication through the ELSA Group's communication forums and social media, this is not enough for distribution. The Editorial Board should look to institutions which host catalogues of legal writing which are accessed by its users for research purposes and persuade them to acquire copies of the Law Review.

As was mentioned in subchapter 6.1, libraries and legal databases will normally not publish materials that do not have the standard features of professional publications such as an ISSN. These are certain quality markers which distinguish between reputable and amateur publications. Legal databases have previously communicated to Editorial Boards of Law Reviews within ELSA that they would normally wait to acquire volumes of a publication until there had been several issues published which demonstrate a continuous and qualitatively consistent operation. Here, it will be very beneficial to have a partnership with a publishing house ensuring that the Law Review is published in a professional manner which reflects the quality of the contents.

When negotiating with libraries and databases about the acquisition of the Law Review, it is best to draw up a long list of different libraries and databases in which the Editorial Board wants to feature the Law Review in. The reasons for this are twofold: firstly, the fewer institutions contacted the lower the likelihood of success and, secondly, it is likelier that an institution accepts to acquire the Law Review if a number of other institutions have already done so. If the Law Review is published by a Local Group of ELSA, the first place to go is to the library of the relevant university and ask them to feature the publication in their catalogue as a way to support student legal writing. It is also useful to harness the power of the ELSA Network in this effort: university libraries will typically make efforts to acquire publications which are requested by the students. It is thus recommended to reach out to fellow ELSA Groups and make them aware of the publication and invite the board members to send in requests to their University libraries to acquire the Law Review.

The aforementioned grassroots style efforts are highly recommended, but they do not substitute the more organised efforts of the Editorial Board to secure publication. Therefore, when the target list of institutions and databases to feature the Law Review has been drafted, the effort of contacting those institutions should begin systematically. Keep in mind that the applicable external relations and partnership rules of ELSA must always be respected, but these are rarely a hindrance to the publication of a Law Review.

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The following is an example of an email template used by the ELSA Law Review to reach out to libraries, institutes and databases to have its volumes featured in their catalogues:

> *Dear [Name],*
>
> *I hope this letter finds you well.*
>
> *By a way of introduction, I am [Your Name], the [Your Position] on the Editorial Board of [Law Review Name]. I am contacting you to enquire about the possibility of having the [Law Review Name] featured in the catalogue of [Library/Institution/Database Name].*
>
> *[Law Review Name] is a peer-reviewed law journal with a mission to create a forum for the analysis and discussion of contemporary legal issues relating to [topic] and serving as an avenue for law students and young lawyers to publish their legal writing. [Law Review Name] only publishes papers which fulfil the scholarly standards of academic publications and is peer-reviewed by relevant experts in partnership with [Academic Partner Name]. [Law Review Name] is published by [Publishing Partner Name] and can be acquired in both print and digital formats. The ISSN of the publication is [insert ISSN].*
>
> *The aim of the Editorial Board is to make [Law Review Name] as accessible as possible to members of the legal community conducting legal research, and it is for this reason that we are enquiring about your interest in providing access to the publication to your [users/patrons/students]. [Law Review Name] already features in the catalogues of other [libraries/institutions/databases] including [Names of Libraries/Institutions/Databases].*
>
> *Should you require further information or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.*
>
> *Kind regards,*
> *[Your Name]*
> *[Your Position]*

By way of conclusion, it should be noted that widening the distribution of a Law Review is a continuous effort that ought to be expanded by each successive Editorial Board. Like in other aspects of the editorial and publishing processes, the successful efforts of the former Editorial Board will help the next Editorial Board continue those efforts successfully. It should also be kept in mind that once a library or legal database agrees to acquire a Law Review, it will most likely continue to acquire future issues of the Law Review. This allows the Editorial Board to sustain its already secured distribution and work on expanding it every single time a new issue is published.

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7. Ensuring Continuity

Guiding Questions: How will the work of publishing the Law Review be divided up between successive Editorial Boards? How will you ensure that once one Editorial Board finishes their work, that the next one will continue?

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Quote attributed to George Santayana

For nearly four decades, ELSA has across its different levels organised thousands of events and projects for the benefit of law students in which thousands of officers have gained organisational experience. Each time, a lesson is learned based on either the successes or failures of that event or project which will be useful for the entire Network as it continues to create opportunities for its members. Cumulatively, the ELSA Network has the potential for an enormous institutional memory, but it is challenged by the high turnover of the Network's human resources who as students are typically not officers for more than one or two years. This challenge is completely relevant to Law Reviews within ELSA which broadly follow the university academic calendar and whose Editorial Boards are in most cases completely replaced every year. It is important to remember that the task of an Editorial Board is not complete until each Editor has a successor who is prepared to continue the work of publishing the Law Review, relying on the institutional memory of their predecessor.

A Law Review which has been structured well in accordance with the instructions given by Chapter 3 has a strong basis to continue year from year due to its infrastructure. However, recruitment and transition during the term of an Editorial Board is the most important way that a successful Law Review can be guaranteed to continue for another year. The Editorial Board or the Board of the ELSA Group responsible for the Law Review should foresee the recruitment of the next Editorial Board in advance of their term expiring. There should not be any overlap in the editorial management of the Law Review as that undermines the continuity of the project and it reduces the likelihood of knowledge gained by the previous Editorial Board being transitioned to the new one. The best way an Editorial Board can sustain knowledge is to keep good records of its activities throughout the year in a document management system (such as Google Drive) which can be passed onto the next Board. It is important to keep good records of all activities and correspondence so that the next Editorial Board can be completely aware of where things stand. It is also highly recommended that the Editorial Board compose a report of some kind which details how their term went and how well they achieved their goals. It is useful for a report of this kind to explain what went well in the editorial and publishing process, but it is crucial for it to explain what went wrong and needs to be improved, so that the next Editorial Board can learn a lesson from the experience of the previous Board.

It is important for the outgoing Editorial Board to remember that all their hard work and efforts to deliver a Law Review can be considered a complete failure if they then fail to recruit successors and transition them for the new role.

7.1 Instituting a Publication Cycle

An effective way of ensuring continuity is by adopting a Publication Cycle for the Law Review by which the Editorial Board must operate. The Publication Cycle sets when a Call for Submissions must open and when an Issue of the Law Review must be published, which allows the Editorial Board to conduct the internal planning to meet the deadlines. Publication Cycles are particularly

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useful because an incoming Editorial Board can foresee how they must structure their work in advance and they can be aware of what tasks are upcoming.

The following are examples of Law Review Publication Cycles which plan for continuous operation of a Law Review. The first Publication Cycle foresees a Law Review that publishes two issues for every volume (i.e. two issues per annum) whereas the second Publication Cycle foresees a Law Review that publishes one issue for every volume. From the perspective of ensuring continuous operation, the Publication Cycle for a Law Review publishing two issues for every volume is likely to be more effective because each Editorial Board takes office right when the Call for Submissions has closed and can begin work immediately.

Publication Cycle for Law Review publishing two issues for every volume

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Publication Cycle for Law Review publishing one issue for every volume

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