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Graduate capabilities assessment rubric for the Bachelor of Laws: problem solving

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Graduate capabilities assessment rubric for the Bachelor of Laws: problem solving

Abstract
Problem solving is the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal. This Graduate Capabilities Assessment rubric, commissioned as part of the Assuring Graduate Capabilities ALTC Project, will assist course coordinators in implementing standards for problem solving skills for graduates of the Bachelor of Laws and in demonstrating evidence of their graduates achi8evement of these standards.

Keywords
assessment, rubric, bachelor, graduate, laws, capabilities, problem, solving

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PROBLEM SOLVING STANDARDS

Adapted from the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics and acknowledged with thanks. See Assuring Graduate Capabilities

Definition: Problem solving is the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal

Application: Graduates of the Bachelor of Laws at the University of Wollongong can recognise the legal and other dimensions of problems and apply logical, critical and creative thinking skills to the resolution of legal problems.

	Graduates of this **course** can
Define Problem	• Analyse and evaluate available information to identify existing or potential legal and other issues in contexts that may be complex and unpredictable. • Articulate and prioritise the identified issues.
Identify Strategies	• Apply knowledge, research, reasoning and creative thinking to identify the law and legal processes relevant to the issues identified and generate a range of appropriate responses. • Identify what further information might be needed in order to generate solutions and identify possible sources of that information.
Propose options	• Generate and articulate approaches and strategies for resolution of the problem that: - demonstrate a sound understanding of relevant legal issues and the application of legal reasoning, and - take into account the ethical dimensions of the problem along with relevant contextual factors including the needs and resources of the parties.
Evaluate options	• Critically evaluate the merits of potential strategies and provide a reasoned argument for the selection of particular approaches and strategies. • Incorporate feedback, review or further information received in relation to proposed strategies and re-evaluate those proposals.
Implement options	• Identity and understand the practical implications of any proposed course of action including: - the need to communicate that proposal in a manner appropriate to the audience; - appropriate alternate dispute resolution options; and - where implementation requires specific action, the jurisdiction, processes and documentation relevant to that action.
Exemplars	In *LLB 302 Law of Business Organisations*, students are given a set of facts in the context of a complex dispute involving a corporation and various other stakeholders. Students, in groups of 4-5, are allocated the role of a director of a company, who is preparing for an upcoming meeting of the board of directors to determine the way forward in relation to the issue/s in dispute. Each student director is given the task of collecting information for a nominated stakeholder in order to enable the board to consider the agenda for the meeting having regard to all of the information available and their overall duties as directors. Each group then develops a 'position paper' for their nominated stakeholder, where they examine the problem posed from that stakeholder's perspective, identifying the issues and possible strategies in order to generate a range of options that may suit the interests of that stakeholder while also taking into account the duties owed by directors. Position papers for each stakeholder are provided to all students in the class. Students then participate in a role play in the form of a two hour 'Board of Directors Meeting', with a representative from each group role-playing as a director. The other group members remain present as a support team, with each director being able to call for 2 x 2 minute consultations with their group during the meeting. A director is nominated as chair for the meeting, with the agenda and rules for meeting being set by the teacher. During the meeting, the 'board' works through the issues, strategies and options available in an attempt to resolve the issues set in the agenda. Following the meeting and in light of their simulated experience as a director, students write a critically reflective piece on the role and obligations of directors and the intersection of corporate, individual and social goals.