

involvement which results in close and thorough supervision, rapid and detailed feedback and high levels of stimulation and motivation; and client involvement leading to unstructured problem-solving and the use of analytical skills. This level of participation promotes the assumption of responsibility, demands the organisation of time and resources, allows for the gradual growth of confidence and engenders a better understanding of the substance and processes of the law.

CLE presents particular challenges in terms of assessment. Some have suggested that the necessary degree of supervision and collaboration implicit in CLE undermines the ability of the staff involved properly to assess performance. However, it also offers the opportunity for a serious reappraisal of the way in which student performance can be assessed. These difficulties are acknowledged and suggestions are made as to how they can be addressed.

Clients of the clinic are advised that the service is provided by students under the supervision of legally qualified members of staff. Great pains are taken to ensure the maintenance of professional standards. The needs of the client are paramount and the obligation to provide a professional standard of performance is all-encompassing.

The author then provides a detailed "nuts and bolts" account of how the clinic at Sheffield Hallam University operates and of its educational impact on the participant students. He concludes that legal education in Britain ignores to its detriment the worth of CLE as an integrated package to be offered to any student who wishes to study the law, regardless of whether that person

wishes to follow a professional legal career.

CONTEXT, CRITICISM AND THEORY

[no material in this edition]

CONTINUING EDUCATION

[no material in this edition]

CURRICULUM

[no material in this edition]

DISTANCE EDUCATION

[no material in this edition]

ENROLMENT POLICIES

[no material in this edition]

EVALUATION

The accreditation debate: thoughts on the AALS's "membership review" function

J W Wegner

95-2 *AALS Newsletter* (April 1995) p 1

The article explains what is meant by the accreditation process of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS), outlines the countervailing views about it and summarises some of the steps now under way to assess and improve the AALS' "membership review" process.

The first section of the article describes how the review, conducted in conjunction with the American Bar Association (ABA), takes place and the role played by the AALS. Two reviews take place concurrently: a "membership review" for the AALS; and an "accreditation review" for the ABA. The purposes of both the reviews are outlined, including to provide an incentive for improving the quality of legal education.

The second section of the article considers some of the views held by both critics and proponents of national accreditation. The author discusses six criticisms of the process and six arguments supporting it. Criticisms include the stifling of diversity, interference with autonomy, the excessive time involved in the process, and over-regulation. Arguments in favour include the educative value of the review, the dialogue which develops, the attainment of quality, and the need for shared values.

The article concludes with an outline of the action plan for improving the AALS' membership review.

FACILITIES

[no material in this edition]

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

[no material in this edition]

GOVERNANCE

[no material in this edition]