

# GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL LAW CLUB



**Bhutan National Legal Institute, 2025**

**Judiciary of Bhutan**

Quote:

*“I hope that the law clubs would bring not only knowing and understanding of the constitution and our laws but also create awareness, respect and value for our past, for our heritage, priority as a nation and true concern for common future.”*

- **HRH Ashi Sonam Dechan Wangchuck, the President of the BNLI**

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### **PREFACE**

The School Law Club Guidelines serve as a comprehensive framework for fostering legal awareness, civic responsibility, and ethical leadership among students across Bhutan. Established under the visionary leadership of the Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) in 2012, the School Law Clubs have played a vital role in nurturing law-abiding citizens by instilling a fundamental understanding of legal principles and the rule of law. This initiative reflects the commitment of BNLI to ensuring that young minds are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate legal challenges and contribute meaningfully to society.

This guideline has been meticulously designed, incorporating insights from foundational documents, recommendations from School Law Club Coordinators, and best practices in legal education. It outlines the structure, administration, and operational modalities of the School Law Clubs, ensuring that they function effectively within the school ecosystem. By providing clear roles and responsibilities for patrons, advisors, coordinators, and student members, the guideline fosters a collaborative environment where students can actively engage with legal concepts practically and meaningfully.

The document also details the composition of the School Law Club Steering Committee, recommended activities, reporting mechanisms, and annual legal programs, all tailored to enhance experiential learning. With a focus on interactive programs such as mock trials, legal literacy workshops, and community outreach initiatives, the School Law Clubs aim to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

We believe that empowering students with legal knowledge not only enhances their critical thinking and advocacy skills but also cultivates a culture of justice, fairness, and integrity from a young age. As we continue to refine and expand the School Law Club initiative, we remain confident that this guideline will serve as a valuable tool for coordinators, educators, and students alike, fostering a generation that is well-informed, responsible, and prepared to uphold the values of justice and democracy.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all stakeholders, including legal professionals, educators, and students, who have contributed to the success of this initiative. May this guideline serve as a beacon of knowledge, guiding our youth toward a future rooted in the principles of law and justice.

**Bhutan National Legal Institute**

**INTRODUCTION**

The School Law Clubs, established under the patronage of the Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) in 2012, aim to *nurture law-abiding citizens* by fostering an understanding of the country’s laws and their significance. The Guideline for the School Law Club is designed based on the foundational documents available in the Institute, incorporating recommendations from School Law Club Coordinators and emphasizing active and hands-on legal education.

**PURPOSES**

The purpose of the School Law Club is “*to nurture every student into a law-abiding citizen.*”

**OBJECTIVES**

1. **Enhancing Legal Awareness and Access to Justice:** The School Law Clubs serve as catalysts for legal literacy, fostering a deeper understanding of laws among youth and the broader Bhutanese society. By organizing legal awareness initiatives, these clubs empower students to become agents of change, sensitizing their peers and communities to their rights, responsibilities, and legal protections.
2. **Creating a Collaborative Platform for Youth Engagement:** The Clubs provide a structured forum where the Judiciary, the Ministry of Education, and other key stakeholders can collaboratively promote legal education among students. This initiative ensures that legal knowledge is integrated into young minds, shaping their perspectives and preparing them to navigate legal frameworks as they mature.
3. **Cultivating Interest in Law and Strengthening Civic Responsibility:** Active participation in the School Law Clubs nurtures an appreciation for the principles of law, democracy, and the rule of law. By immersing themselves in legal discussions and activities, students develop a strong sense of civic duty, contributing to national progress through informed and responsible citizenship.
4. **Developing Essential Skills for Personal and Professional Growth:** The Clubs serve as an avenue for students to refine their writing, communication, and analytical skills, equipping them with the ability to articulate ideas persuasively and engage effectively in legal discourse. These competencies are instrumental in preparing them for leadership roles in the future.
5. **Preparing Youth for Public Life and Community Leadership:** By providing exposure to real-world legal applications, the Clubs instill confidence and readiness in students to engage in public service and community initiatives. This fosters a generation of legally informed citizens who can contribute meaningfully to governance and social justice.

6. **Adding Value to the Education System through Practical Learning:** The integration of legal education into school activities enhances students' critical thinking, research, debating, and presentation skills. This experiential learning approach complements traditional education, ensuring holistic intellectual and personal development.

Through these objectives, the School Law Clubs not only enrich the academic journey of students but also contribute to a legally aware, responsible, and empowered generation that upholds justice and the rule of law.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE CLUB**

The BNLI will oversee and monitor the School Law Club Program through regular quarterly/biannually virtual meetings, as well as by reviewing the Action Plans and Annual Club Report to ensure its effective implementation. The respective School Administration shall be primarily responsible for the overall coordination and operation of the Club, with designated Club Coordinators playing an active role in facilitating its activities. Schools may also develop and implement suitable strategies and policies to further enhance the Club's impact, and they should promptly inform BNLI of these initiatives for proper documentation and updates.

### **COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL LAW CLUB STEERING COMMITTEE**

- BNLI - Patron
- Drangpon/Registrar - Advisor/Mentor
- Principal - Secretary General
- Teacher - Coordinator
- Student Club Leaders (Male & Female each)

### **APPOINTMENT OF CLUB COORDINATOR**

Each School Law Club shall be led by a dedicated Club Coordinator, with the support of Co-coordinators from any professional background, provided they demonstrate commitment, active engagement, and a passion for the Club's mission.

### **APPOINTMENT OF CLUB CAPTAINS**

To ensure the efficient administration and smooth functioning of the Club, one male and one female student shall be appointed as Club Captains. They will work closely with the Club Coordinator(s) in managing activities and fostering an environment of leadership and learning.

### MAINTAINING REGISTERS

The Law Club should maintain at least two separate Registers for the following purposes.

1. **Membership Register:** To reflect the names of the Club members in every Academic Year starting from 2012 with signatures of all the members as well as the name and signature of the Teacher Coordinator(s).
2. **Activities Register:** To maintain a brief description of the activities undertaken by the Club with date, place, and number of participants. A brief report about the activities undertaken by the Club has to be sent to the Club Patron (BNLI) every year as specified below under Reporting and Evaluation.

### ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CLUB STEERING COMMITTEE

- **BNLI as Patron:**
  - Provide overall guidance and support for the Clubs.
  - Design and disseminate legal education materials.
  - Organize training and workshops for Club Coordinators.
  - Monitor and evaluate club activities through Progress Reports.
  - Facilitate collaboration with legal professionals and Institutions.
- **Judge/Registrar of the Court as Club Advisor**
  - Advise and mentor Principals and Club Coordinators for the Club's effective functioning.
  - Deliver lectures to the Law Club Members on the themed legal topics recommended by the Patron.
  - Deliver lectures from time to time as and when requested by the Club Coordinators or at their free will.
- **Secretary General/School as Coordinating Institute:**
  - Ensure smooth operation of the Club as per the provided guidelines.
  - Appoint a dedicated Club Coordinator and Co-Club Coordinator(s).
  - Allocate necessary resources and time for club activities.
- **Club Coordinator and Co-Coordinator(s):**
  - Act as the liaison between BNLI and the School Law Club.
  - Develop and implement the Club's Annual Action Plan.
  - Raise and manage the Club budget.
  - Supervise and mentor club members in their activities.
  - Submit annual progress and activity reports to BNLI.

- **Club Members:**

- Actively participate in club meetings and activities.
- Assist in organizing events and peer-to-peer legal education sessions.
- Commit to the Club's objectives and abide by its rules.

### **CLUB MEMBERSHIP AND PERIOD**

- Membership is open to students in classes as follows:
  - Class V and above for the Primary School;
  - Class VII and above for the Lower Secondary School; and
  - Class IX and above for the Middle and Higher Secondary Schools.
- A Club Period of at least 40 minutes to 1 hour to be allocated by a respective school.
- Clubs should meet at least twice a month during designated club periods.
- Each Club should maintain between 10 to 40 active members.

### **ANNUAL LEGAL PROGRAM**

This section suggests diverse activities for the Action Plan but at the Club's Convenience:

- **Quarter 1: Orientation and Legal Literacy (March - April)**
  - Develop and submit Activity Plans to the BNLI.
  - Orientation on club objectives and responsibilities.
  - Workshops on basic legal rights and duties (e.g., youth laws, cyber safety).
  - Poster competitions with law-related themes.
- **Quarter 2: Practical Engagement (May)**
  - Guest Lectures from legal professionals.
  - Field visits to courts, police stations, and law firms.
  - Mock trial simulations with roles as Judges, Attorneys, and Defence Lawyers.
  - Mock Mediation with roles as disputed Parties and Mediators.
- **Quarter 3: Community Outreach (August - September)**
  - Awareness campaigns on gender equality, constitutional rights, or anti-drug abuse.
  - Debates on legal topics such as environmental protection and cybercrime.
  - Legal literacy drives for the school and community.
- **Quarter 4: Reflection and Sharing (October - November)**
  - Moot Court competitions with inter-club participation (High School only).
  - Publication of a club newsletter showcasing activities and achievements.
  - Submission of an Annual Report to BNLI.



### ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLUB

This section suggests programs with broader lens to be executed:

- **Interactive Programs:**
  - Role-playing historic legal cases.
  - Case study analyses of landmark judgments.
  - Law-themed games and quizzes.
- **Skill-Building Activities:**
  - Workshops on drafting legal documents like contracts and petitions.
  - Public speaking and advocacy training sessions.
- **Collaboration Opportunities:**
  - Exchange programs between school law clubs.
  - Networking with local lawyers and law enforcement officers.

### DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN AND SUBMITTING AN ANNUAL REPORT

- Club Coordinators should draft an Action Plan at the beginning of the year, detailing planned activities, timelines, and resource requirements.
- BNLI will review and provide feedback on the Action Plans to ensure alignment with objectives.
- Club Coordinators must submit an Action Plan to the BNLI in March.
- Club Coordinators must submit an Annual Report to the BNLI in November.

### REPORTING AND EVALUATION

- A virtual meeting will be hosted bi-annually to share and discuss Club activities and challenges.
- BNLI will conduct an Annual Review Meeting to assess performance and gather feedback for improvement.
- BNLI will issue an E-Certificate for Club Members through the Club Coordinator(s).

### ACTION PLAN FORMAT

1. **Introduction**
  - Brief Background of the School Law Club
  - Data of the Club: Details of Coordinator and Club Members
    - Name, Class, Gender, and Age Range
2. **Goals and Objectives for the year**
  - Outline the overall goals for the year
3. **Key Activities and Timeline**

Guidelines for School Law Club

Activity	Description	Timeline	Responsible Members	Expected Outcome
Activity 1	Brief Description	Week 1 (05.03.25)	Coordinator & Members	Impact/Product
Activity 2	Brief Description	Week II (12.03.25)	Coordinator & Members	Impact/Product
Activity 3	Brief Description	Week III (19.03.25)	Coordinator & Members	Impact/Product

ANNUAL REPORT FORMAT

1. Introduction

- Brief Background of the School Law Club
- Data of the Club: Details of Coordinators and Club Members
  - Name, Class, Student Code, Gender, Age Range, and Total Number.

2. Brief Overview of the club’s annual activities.

- Activities’ brief description with relevant photos
- **WH’s** - What, Who, Where, When, Why, and, How of each activity and its impacts.
- **Example:** *“On February 10, 2025, Druk School hosted a guest lecture for its School Law Club members, inviting a District Court Judge from Thimphu to speak on “The Child in Conflict with Law.” The session aimed to educate students on juvenile justice, legal rights, and responsibilities. The judge provided real-world insights, interactive discussions, and case examples, fostering awareness and critical thinking. This initiative enhanced students’ legal knowledge, encouraging responsible behavior and inspiring future careers in law and justice.”* - **Attach testimonials and relevant photos.**

3. What impacts did the activities have on the Club members and personnel who were engaged with the club?

4. Challenges Faced and Recommendations

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE PROGRAM

- **Inclusivity:** Activities should cater to varying student levels.
- **Engagement:** Hands-on, experiential learning to make legal education meaningful.
- **Sustainability:** Prioritize quality over quantity, with manageable activities spread across the year.

### CONCLUSION

This program is designed to equip students with practical legal knowledge while nurturing values of justice, respect, and civic responsibility, ensuring the motto of the law clubs is upheld effectively. The Law Club is an essential social arm of the School. The Club will create legal awareness among the youth and prepare them for public life. The Club will help add value to our education system and provide students with access to legal information. It is one way of investing in our youth.

This guideline has been meticulously developed and formally endorsed by the Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) in collaboration with 64 School Law Club Coordinators representing 48 School Law Clubs across all 20 districts. The drafting process was anchored in the foundational documents governing the School Law Clubs, enriched by comprehensive feedback and substantive recommendations from the Coordinators. Following rigorous deliberations, the guideline underwent a structured two-phase review, allowing for critical analysis and a designated two-week commenting period during the Legal Education Awareness Programs held in Phuentsholing and Samdrup Jongkhar in 2025. To ensure the continued efficacy and adaptability of the School Law Clubs, this guideline remains subject to amendments by the Institute, either on its initiative or upon the reasoned proposal of the School Law Club Coordinators, with a steadfast commitment to enhancing the functionality and success of the program.

*“A nation’s future will mirror the quality of her youth - a nation cannot fool herself into thinking of a bright future when she has not invested wisely in her children.”*

~ His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck