

Public legal education: new principles and committee

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The Attorney General's Office is relaunching the Public Legal Education (PLE) Committee.

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) is relaunching the Public Legal Education (PLE) Committee to raise the profile of public legal education and support more strategic, coordinated delivery across the sector.

The new PLE Committee

The PLE Committee will return to the AGO, which will provide secretariat support. The Committee will be sector-led, with members drawn from across the public legal education community. It will meet four times a year and retain its existing sub-groups focused on adult and youth audiences.

The Attorney General will provide strategic oversight, attending Committee meetings and meeting co-Chairs annually.

New PLE principles

The Committee's initial focus will be putting the new Public Legal Education Principles into practice. These principles were co-created with stakeholders at a recent PLE Policy Hackathon.

The AGO will support the sector by improving coordination, sharing evidence and good practice, and helping activity reach people in the right places and formats. This work is intended to complement, not replace, existing provision.

The Principles

The principles are outlined below.

L - Legal capability: Public legal education gives people the confidence, skills, and knowledge to understand their rights and responsibilities, promoting a rule of law culture where everyone can use the law effectively in their own lives to solve and prevent problems and improve wellbeing.

E - Evidence-led: Public legal education must be authoritative, evidence-based, and outcome focussed, drawing on trusted sources to provide clear, accurate, and practical guidance. This will help to counter dis- and misinformation that can erode trust in institutions, particularly in an age of developing AI.

A - Active participation: Public legal education is developed and delivered with communities, recognising people as individuals with unique experiences and needs, not simply as 'users' or 'cases'. This includes understanding how people learn best and tailoring to include practical skills-based approaches.

R - Responsive: Public legal education should help to break down barriers and harness new technologies and imaginative approaches where relevant, to demystify the law and reach people where they are, reflecting how they access and engage with information today.

N - National mission: Public legal education is a vital public good and a source of civic pride, central to a fair and flourishing society. It is not the preserve of any one sector, but a whole-society endeavour, shaped, and delivered by a diverse range of organisations and communities. Legal information should not be reserved for legal spaces only.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-legal-education-new-principles-and-committee>