



This review method
is ESG-compliant

International Quality Review

Mid-Cycle Review

Kuwait International Law School

Review Report

May 2026

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About this mid-cycle review

This is a report of a mid-cycle review conducted by The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) of the Kuwait International Law School (KILAW). The mid-cycle review is desk-based and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Dr Osian Rees
- Dr Irene Ainsworth.

The full International Quality Review (IQR) in February 2023, resulted in a [published report](#). The QAA review team concluded that the Kuwait International Law School (KILAW) met all 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#). The team identified two features of good practice and made 12 recommendations.

This mid-cycle review evaluates progress against the key actions since the IQR and considers any significant changes that may impact on the ability of the Kuwait International Law School (KILAW) to continue to meet the ESG standards.

Outcome of the mid-cycle review

1 From the evidence provided, the review team concludes that the Kuwait International Law School (KILAW) is making **satisfactory progress** since the February 2023 International Quality Review and that the period of validity of the IQR be extended to January 2029.

Summary of IQR outcomes

Overview of the institution

2 Kuwait International Law School (KILAW), the only private law school in Kuwait, has been offering legal education leading to two-year paralegal studies, LLB and LLM degrees under licence from the Kuwait Private Universities Council since March 2011 when the first cohort of 253 students was enrolled. Its vision is to be: 'A model institution that provides distinguished education, develops legal, auditing and norms capabilities, and adopts critical thinking'. KILAW has identified six strategic aims relating to university transformation and institutional growth; an optimal staff-to-student ratio of 1:22 to support academic quality, personalised learning, and effective supervision; quality assurance and accreditation; research advancement and innovation; global engagement and strategic partnerships; and community engagement and national contribution.

Good practice identified by the 2023 International Quality Review

3 The IQR team identified the following features of good practice at KILAW:

- support for staff research, which includes staff contribution to the KILAW annual international conference and the KILAW research journal (ESG Standard 1.5)
- the high level of staff commitment, high quality of planning, and clear dedication to students' success within the Students Development and Competitions Department (ESG Standard 1.6).

Recommendations of the 2023 International Quality Review

- 4 The IQR team made the following recommendations to KILAW:
- ensure QA policies and procedures address the relationship between committees in the governance structure, and contribute to strategic management, as well as develop the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance (ESG Standard 1.1)
 - develop and publish a learning, teaching and assessment strategy including a more detailed and clear procedures concerning the external examiners (ESG Standard 1.3)
 - review the terms of reference of the external examiners committee, develop clear written procedures for the appointment of external examiners and specify the maximum appointment term for external examiners (ESG Standard 1.3)
 - formally respond in writing to 'all' recommendations in each external examiner report on an annual basis, and that the report is formally considered and responded to by the Academic Advisory Board (ESG Standard 1.3)
 - develop a formal process of issuing and verifying graduation documents, potentially through the pre-existing Publication Standards Committee (ESG Standard 1.4)
 - develop an institutional strategy and operational forward plan for the 'continuous professional development' of staff which brings together all the current methods of support into one overarching strategy (ESG Standard 1.5)
 - strengthen and consistently embed the role of academic and administrative advisors, as well as focusing on how the service is communicated to students (ESG Standard 1.6)
 - improve ongoing use of institutional data and dashboard to enhance the timeliness of strategic and operational decision-making, including for data relating to monitoring and progression of students (ESG Standard 1.7)
 - develop and apply accessibility criteria to all internal and public information (ESG Standard 1.8)
 - develop a formal sign-off procedure to ensure the accuracy of public information and to enable it to maintain quality of public information, especially in tight turnaround (ESG Standard 1.8)
 - ensure the updated ongoing monitoring and programme review procedures are fully and effectively implemented, engaging internal and external stakeholders and taking into consideration their feedback (ESG Standard 1.9)
 - strengthen action-planning approaches, to include forward-thinking projections, build in the maintenance of good practice, integrate action plans generated from various review activities and correlate these with strategic plans and internal quality assurance procedures (ESG Standard 1.10).

Conditions of the 2023 International Quality Review

5 The IQR team set two conditions:

- to further embed and strengthen quality assurance processes as part of strategic management and ensure consistent oversight and full effectiveness of all stages of the quality assurance cycle (ESG Standard 1.1)
- to develop ongoing monitoring of programmes and effectively implement periodic review processes, including by strengthening communication approaches and stakeholder involvement (ESG Standard 1.9).

6 KILAW responded to these conditions in October 2023 and the review team confirmed that the conditions had been addressed and that all 10 ESG Standards had been met, but recommended that further work was necessary to ensure the full and effective implementation of the updated QA policies and ongoing monitoring and programme review procedures address the relationship between committees in the governance structure, and contribute to strategic management, as well as develop the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

Changes since the last IQR review visit

7 KILAW plans to extend its premises subject to the necessary approvals being obtained. There have also been changes in KILAW's management and administration. The Diploma Programme Director, Dean of Admission and Registration, General Registrar and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs were appointed in October 2024, followed by the appointment of the Second Assistant Dean for Student Affairs; Director of the Governance and Compliance Office; and Heads of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office, Academic and Training Development Office, and Alumni Office in September 2025. In January 2026, two further appointments were made to the posts of Assistant Dean for the Postgraduate School and Senior Officer of the Admission Department.

Findings from the mid-cycle review analysis

8 In response to the recommendations and good practice identified in the IQR report, KILAW created an action plan which was published in February 2024, followed by a unified Institutional Action Plan published in December 2024. Progress relating to the recommendations and good practice is described in the paragraphs below.

Recommendations

9 The IQR team set a condition consisting of three recommendations that KILAW should give immediate attention to its oversight arrangements and the usability of quality assurance outcomes for strategic decision-making. Following further evidence submitted by KILAW in October 2023, the team determined that the condition had been met, but recommended that further work was necessary to **ensure QA policies and procedures address the relationship between committees in the governance structure, and contribute to strategic management, as well as develop the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance (Recommendation 1).**

10 KILAW provided charts to illustrate the relationship between committees involved in governance and quality management. The reporting lines between bodies providing strategic leadership and oversight and those committees and units implementing policy are clear. The

Board of Trustees, KILAW's governing body, sits at the apex of the Quality Management Structure. It sets and monitors the implementation of policies. The President is responsible for management and chairs KILAW's Council, the chief academic authority. Extracts from Council meeting minutes show consideration of matters raised by the Council's four main committees: the Education and Student Experience Committee; Academic Quality and Standards Committee; Research Committee; and the Students' Progression and Awards Committee. The Quality Assurance Policy sets out the structures and processes in place to ensure that the different constituent parts of the School, and internal and external stakeholders, understand their responsibilities for quality assurance.

11 In order to ensure QA policies and procedures contribute to strategic management, KILAW has continued to implement a Quality Assurance Calendar and the Governance and Compliance Office produces periodic reports for the KILAW President providing updates on quality assurance activities. KILAW has developed mechanisms to engage with external stakeholders in a structured manner, including employers, alumni and parents. Examples provided show that employers contribute to the Curriculum Committee, and a Parents Club provides parents with opportunities to discuss issues with KILAW staff during regular meetings. Recommendation 1 has been addressed.

12 The IQR team noted that KILAW did not have a written and published learning, teaching and assessment strategy and recommended that KILAW **develop and publish a learning, teaching and assessment strategy including a more detailed and clear procedures concerning the external examiners (Recommendation 2)**. The team stated that the strategy should define the institution's approach to student learning opportunities; enhancement to curriculum design; the range of support provided to students; and the embedding of employability throughout a student's course of study. In addition, the team considered that the strategy would benefit from defining the support provided for both faculty and support services staff, and KILAW's strategy for English as a language of instruction.

13 KILAW's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (2021-2025) was reviewed in 2023. It now consists of 10 substantive sections, including student-centred learning and student engagement; academic standards and programme design; teaching and learning approaches; assessment principles and practices; external examining and assessment integrity; annual and periodic review; employability, practice-based learning, and external engagement; technology-enhanced learning and artificial intelligence; staff development and scholarly activity; and evidence-based enhancement. A new Strategy (2026-2030) is in development and due to be approved in May 2026. Further detail in relation to the role of external examiners is set out in the Terms of Reference for the External Examiners Committee, which are further considered below. Recommendation 2 has been addressed.

14 The IQR team noted that KILAW did not have explicit written procedures for the appointment of external examiners, including a role description and range of duties. Furthermore, the external examiner term of office was not specified, and several external examiners had been in place for eight years. In addition, external examiners who met the IQR team were unclear as to the terms of reference for the External Examiners Committee, and the appointment terms for becoming an external examiner. Accordingly, the team recommended that KILAW **review the terms of reference of the external examiners committee, develop clear written procedures for the appointment of external examiners and specify the maximum appointment term for external examiners (Recommendation 3)**.

15 The EEC's Terms of Reference set out the Committee's responsibilities and provide detail as to how its reports are reviewed within KILAW. There is also some detail relating to external examiner appointment criteria and responsibilities, and the term of appointment, which is for three years and 'renewable for further periods'. In November 2023, KILAW wrote

to the members of the External Examiners Committee extending their membership, and thereby their appointment as external examiners, for a further two years, with further duration of appointment to be discussed after that time. In response to an additional information request from the mid-cycle review team, KILAW indicated that there is no fixed limit to any extension of external examiner appointment, and stated that this approach reflects the value of the experience and expertise gained by the external examiners due to their service. The mid-cycle review team notes that permitting open-ended renewable appointments is out of line with Principle 6 of the [External Examining Principles](#) (UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment, August 2022) which refers to the avoidance of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that might arise from repeated terms of office. The team concludes that KILAW has partially addressed the recommendation but needs to set out and implement a maximum appointment term for external examiners.

16 The IQR team recommended that KILAW **formally respond in writing to 'all' recommendations in each external examiner report on an annual basis, and that the report is formally considered and responded to by the Academic Advisory Board (Recommendation 4)**. Formal responses are now provided to all recommendations made in external examiner reports. The external examiners prepare a collective report after each formal visit, which take place twice annually. In accordance with the EEC's Terms of Reference, these reports are submitted to the School President, then sent to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office and, following consultation with relevant committees, an action plan is prepared, which ultimately goes to the Academic Advisory Board. External examiner reports and corresponding action plans demonstrate consideration of all recommendations. Academic Advisory Board minutes also provide evidence of a formal response to issues raised by the external examiners. Recommendation 4 has been satisfactorily addressed.

17 The IQR team noted that the Graduation Officer checks graduation certificates but recommended that KILAW should **develop a formal process of issuing and verifying graduation documents, potentially through the pre-existing Publication Standards Committee (Recommendation 5)**. KILAW has developed a Policy for Issuing Final Transcripts and Graduation Certificates, which was approved by the KILAW Council and Board of Trustees in April 2024. The Policy sets out a detailed process for issuing graduation documents, including final transcripts, letters and graduation certificates. This role is undertaken by the Graduation Office rather than the Publication Standards Committee. The reason for this is that the role of the Publication Standards Committee relates to institutional publications and public information, whereas graduation documents fall under academic governance and student records management. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 5.

18 In response to the IQR recommendation that KILAW **develop an institutional strategy and operational forward plan for the 'continuous professional development' of staff which brings together all the current methods of support into one overarching strategy (Recommendation 6)**, an Academic Development and Training Strategy (2025-2028), applicable to both academic and administrative staff has been produced. The Strategy has been designed to build on the existing CPD framework including the Academic Development Office Operational Plan 2022-2023, and a consultation process was undertaken during its development. A two-day Academic Development and Training Program was held in January 2026, covering a range of topics including, *inter alia*, artificial intelligence and integrating teaching and research. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 6.

19 Having learned of inconsistent awareness by students of both the academic and administrative advisor systems, the IQR team recommended that KILAW should **strengthen and consistently embed the role of academic and administrative advisors, as well as**

focusing on how the service is communicated to students (Recommendation 7). All students continue to be assigned an academic advisor upon admission, and the Guidance and Orientation Office provides administrative guidance. An Advising Guidance Manual defining administrative and academic guidance and setting out relevant information was introduced in 2024-25. Academic Advising Weeks are held on a regular basis and staff are provided with training on academic advising. In addition, reports are produced setting out issues raised by students in the academic advising process. Student survey feedback suggests high levels of satisfaction with the Guidance and Orientation Office, including in terms of ease of access to the office, and in relation to the interaction of staff with students and the promptness of their response to student requests. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 7.

20 With regard to the IQR recommendation that KILAW should improve ongoing use of institutional data and dashboard to enhance the timeliness of strategic and operational decision-making, including for data relating to monitoring and progression of students (Recommendation 8), KILAW emphasises the effective use of institutional data which is a core element in monitoring reports and decision-making. Examples of how operational data is used in relation to student monitoring, include attendance tracking and the use of automated alert systems, whereby students may be required to meet their academic advisor. Examples of the use of data to enable timely strategic decision-making were provided for the mid-cycle review team. These included data relating to students registered in sections (defined as the number of class groups of the same course offered in a semester) to enable the efficient allocation of resources; the use of results of satisfaction surveys to inform service improvement decisions; and an analysis of the effectiveness of the academic advising system in addressing academic warning cases over a three year period, with a view to meeting relevant key performance indicators and ESG requirements. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 8.

21 The IQR team recommended that KILAW should develop and apply accessibility criteria to all internal and public information (Recommendation 9) and develop a formal sign-off procedure to ensure the accuracy of public information and to enable it to maintain quality of public information, especially in tight turnaround (Recommendation 10). In response, KILAW has updated its Accessibility Criteria for all internal and public information. These criteria form part of the Public Information Sign-Off Procedure issued in 2024, setting out a formal sign-off process for all public information, with a flowchart setting out the operation of the process, and a sign-off checklist. The criteria must be met before any information is published. Accessibility forms part of the Sign-off Procedures Checklist, and the Governance and Compliance Office monitors implementation. Ensuring compliance with accessibility standards and requirements forms part of the Publications Standards Committee's terms of reference. These include reviewing and verifying the accuracy of content prior to publication and minutes made available to the mid-cycle review team provided evidence of the work of the Committee in this respect. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendations 9 and 10.

22 The IQR team considered that more time was needed before the effectiveness of implementing the updated ongoing monitoring and review procedures could be fully evaluated, it therefore recommended that KILAW should **ensure the updated ongoing monitoring and programme review procedures are fully and effectively implemented, engaging internal and external stakeholders and taking into consideration their feedback (Recommendation 11).** KILAW has strengthened its framework for ongoing monitoring in response to the IQR report. The Quality Assurance Policy includes a section on ongoing monitoring, including the role of stakeholders, and the Quality Assurance Handbook has undergone major revision so that it now makes extensive reference to stakeholders. In addition, ongoing monitoring and programme review have been expressly incorporated, including details of how ongoing monitoring is carried out, as well as

programme review procedures. KILAW's Quality Assurance Calendar for 2025/26 is detailed and sets out tasks to be completed on a month-by-month basis, together with confirmation that the tasks have been completed. Examples of stakeholder engagement, including engagement with parents; employers presenting proposals to committees and monitoring the implementation of such proposals; and facilitating student representation on relevant committees show that stakeholder engagement is embedded in ongoing monitoring. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 11.

23 In response to the IQR recommendation that it should **strengthen action-planning approaches, to include forward-thinking projections, build in the maintenance of good practice, integrate action plans generated from various review activities and correlate these with strategic plans and quality assurance procedures (Recommendation 12)**, KILAW has prepared a unified Institutional Action Plan, including recommendations from the IQR, the Academic Advisory Board, and in one instance, external examiners. External accreditation and evaluation requirements have also been converted into key performance indicators, together with information as to which body or bodies it is a requirement and who is responsible for its implementation. KILAW has satisfactorily addressed recommendation 12.

Good practice

24 The 2023 IQR report identified support for staff research, **which includes staff contribution to the KILAW annual international conference and the KILAW research journal** as a feature of good practice. KILAW is continuing to promote and support an active research culture through a range of activities including research support sessions and research talks, collaboration with external researchers, research incentives and funding and research training and development. **The high level of staff commitment, high quality of planning, and clear dedication to students' success within the Students Development and Competitions Department** identified as a feature of good practice by the 2023 IQR team also continues to provide enhanced learning and engagement opportunities for students, informed by student and other stakeholder feedback.

Development of quality assurance and enhancement procedures

25 KILAW has taken steps to develop its quality assurance framework since the 2023 IQR. This includes reviewing and updating the Quality Assurance Policy and making extensive developments to the Quality Assurance Handbook. The Quality Assurance Governance Structure has been more clearly defined. In addition, an annual quality assurance calendar has been developed which incorporates relevant tasks, together with confirmation of task completion. As already noted, this helps ensure that relevant processes are effectively implemented.

26 There has been an increase in the structured use of internal and external stakeholders, including students, alumni, employers and parents. These stakeholders provide input through a range of mechanisms, which are subsequently taken into consideration in informing developments. In addition, further use is made of data for enhancement processes, including the use of dashboards and key performance indicators.

QAA3122 - R34712 - July 2026

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