

INDIGENOUS LEGAL ISSUES, INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES AND INDIGENOUS LAW IN THE NZ LLB CURRICULUM

ABSTRACT

The incorporation of Indigenous content within the Bachelor of Laws curriculum is one measure that may contribute to the development of bicultural legal education in New Zealand. Incorporating Indigenous content into law courses can help to make the study of law more relevant to Indigenous communities and provide a critical framework from which changes to the legal system can be advanced. This paper identifies three distinct types of Indigenous content that may be usefully incorporated into the Bachelor of Laws curriculum: Indigenous legal issues; Indigenous perspectives; and Indigenous law. The inclusion of each type of Indigenous content has distinct benefits but also requires distinct forms of delivery. This paper considers these benefits and forms of delivery in relation to courses on Māori customary law and constitutional and administrative law, concluding that, in order to be effective, the incorporation of Indigenous content must be based on clearly identified objectives, with the type of content deliberately selected to meet those objectives, and delivered in a way which is suited to that content.

Keywords: legal education, Indigenous law, Indigenous legal issues, Indigenous perspectives, bicultural, Māori