



Writing Competition Handbook



IN EFFECT JAN. 12, 2025

THE EUROPEAN LAW STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
IE LAW SCHOOL

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE NOTES EDITOR

Dearest Participant,

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that we introduce the official ELSA IE Law Review Essay Writing Competition. Since its inception, the European Law Students' Association has provided a platform for academic excellence, fostering critical thinking and encouraging dialogue on pressing legal issues. The ELSA IE Law Review Essay Writing Competition is a cornerstone of these efforts, showcasing the talent and intellect of our writers while contributing to the advancement of legal scholarship.

This handbook sets the framework for our esteemed competition, but also serves as a testament to the dedication and professionalism of the Writing Competition Committee. This handbook outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Committee in planning and executing the competition, ensuring that every step of the process adheres to the highest standards of fairness and transparency. Furthermore, it details the rules and regulations governing participants. It provides clear guidelines to maintain a level playing field and uphold the integrity of the competition.

As we unveil the first ever edition of this competition, it is crucial that we uphold the innate values of ELSA IE. This handbook is more than a set of instructions, it is a reflection of our shared mission to create opportunities for learning and growth while fostering a community of legal students dedicated to the nurturing of exceptional legal minds and professionals.

I encourage each of you, whether a competitor or a member of the organising committee, to read this handbook carefully and thoroughly, adhering to its principles. If any questions or concerns are to arise, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at lawreview.ieuniversity@es.elsa.org.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elektra', written in a cursive style.

Elektra Sarafopoulou
Executive Notes Editor

Article I. Overview

Dear Participant,

Welcome to the ELSA IE Law Review's Essay Competition Handbook. This handbook serves as your comprehensive guide to every aspect of the competition, from assisting Editors in selecting compelling topics for participants, to guiding the process of identifying qualified judges and ultimately choosing the winning essays.

As to the Members of the Organizing Committee, you play a vital role in fostering academic excellence and upholding the Law Review's rigorous standards. Your careful consideration and expertise ensure that the competition upholds the highest standards, providing a platform for participants to explore complex legal issues while showcasing their analytical and writing skills.

Article II. The Adoption of the Topic

Each year, Committee Members will be chosen and appointed by the entirety of the Law Review's Editorial Board. The Committee will be chaired by the Executive Notes Editor of the Law Review. The Members will serve on the Committee until the expiry of their term. The Committee must organize and execute the Essay Writing Competition by following this guidebook.

Section 2.01 Establishing the Topic

- (a) The Committee will convene to discuss and initiate the planning process for the Essay Writing Competition. Prior to this meeting, all Committee Members are required to conduct thorough research into contemporary legal issues. This preparatory research will ensure an informed and robust discussion during the planning stage.
- (b) The topic for the competition must address a pressing legal issue that is both current and of significant scholarly interest. It should be sufficiently broad to allow participants to offer unique perspectives and demonstrate originality in their analyses. However, the topic must also be focused enough to avoid excessive divergence or ambiguity in interpretation.
- (c) The preliminary proposal for the competition topic will be presented during the Committee meeting and must be unanimously approved by all its Members.

Section 2.02 Board Discussion and Voting

- (a) During the following Editorial Board Meeting of the Law Review, the Committee must present the proposed topic for the Essay Writing Competition for collective review and discussion.
- (b) Each Member of the Board is granted one vote, and all Members must be physically present to vote.
- (c) Votes from all Members carry equal weight, with no allowance for proxy voting or weighted votes.
- (d) A simple majority vote, defined as more than half of the present voting members, is necessary to adopt the topic.

Section 2.03 **Currently Selected Topic 2025 Edition**

- (a) Freedom of Expression and Hate Speech: Where to Draw the Line?**
 - (i) In an era of heightened online discourse, where should the legal boundaries between freedom of expression and the prohibition of hate speech be set? Explore the constitutional, human rights, and public policy implications of regulating hate speech without infringing on free speech rights.**
- (b) While all submissions in this Edition should relate and address the above topic, it is the responsibility of each author to narrow down the question, so that it can be answered within the limitations imposed for the purposes of the competition. The above topic is an overarching theme, which does not constitute a research question on its own.**

Section 2.04 Selecting the Judges

- (a) It is the role of the Committee to thoroughly select eligible judges for the Essay Writing Competition.
- (b) The judges must be experts in the field of the selected topic ensuring impartiality and rigorosity in the selection of the competition winners.
- (c) The Judges Panel will be composed of the following members:
 - (i) The Editor-in-Chief;
 - (ii) The Vice-Chairman;
 - (iii) The Executive Notes Editor;
 - (iv) The Permanent Advisor;
 - (v) At least two (2) Professors, who may be selected from within IE Law School or outside.

Article III. The Rules for Participants

Section 3.01 Eligibility

- (a) Participation in the Essay Writing Competition is open to all Bachelor IE Law School students, including those students that study a double degree in conjunction with a Law Degree.
- (b) This rule ensures equal access to the competition for all aspiring legal scholars fostering diverse participation.
- (c) Only individual submissions are permitted to ensure that each essay reflects the unique analytical abilities of a single author.
- (d) Collaborative essays are not allowed, as this would compromise the individual assessment of skills and analysis.
- (e) Each submission must represent the original and independent work of the author to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the competition.
- (f) Members of the ELSA IE Law Review Board are barred from entering into this competition to ensure absolute neutrality and fairness.

Section 3.02 Use of Artificial Intelligence

- (a) The use of AI tools is only permitted during the brainstorming phase of the essay preparation. Participants may utilize AI to generate ideas, explore potential topics, or gather inspiration.
- (b) The use of AI is strictly prohibited during the formatting or writing phases of the essay.
- (c) AI tools may not be used as a source for factual information or as a basis for argumentation. Essays must rely on credible and verifiable references to ensure academic rigor.
- (d) Any essay found to contain AI-generated content in its writing or formatting will result in immediate disqualification. This rule ensures that the final submission reflects solely the participants individual effort, originality, and analytical skills.
 - (i) The ELSA IE Law Review Essay Writing Competition Committee recognizes that not all tools are reliable in the detection of AI Generated content, and therefore only the tools approved by the Editorial Board will be used for detection of such content.
 - (ii) Essays which contain over 30% of AI-generated content will be automatically disqualified.

Section 3.03 Plagiarism Policy

- (a) Participants must ensure that their essay is entirely original and authored solely by themselves. This requirement is in place to uphold the academic integrity of the Law Review and ensure a fair competition between participants.
- (b) Plagiarism, in any form, undermines the principles of academic excellence and originality, and will result in immediate disqualification.

- (c) All submissions will be subjected to rigorous plagiarism detection measures to maintain the credibility of the competition. By enforcing these measures, the Law Review protects the value of original contributions and ensures that no participant has an unfair advantage.
 - (i) Essays found to contain over 15% of plagiarised content will be automatically disqualified from the competition.

Section 3.04 Word Count Requirements

- (a) Essays must be between 1,500 and 2,000 words in length. This range ensures that submissions are substantial enough to allow for in-depth analysis, while also being concise enough to meet the demanding deadlines and demonstrate clarity.
- (b) Footnotes, endnotes, and references are excluded from the word count.
- (c) Submissions that fail to meet these word count requirements will be disqualified, ensuring uniformity and fairness in the evaluation process.

Section 3.05 Citation Requirements

- (a) All essays must adhere strictly to the Bluebook citation format for referencing and footnotes. This ensures consistency and professionalism across all submissions, reflecting the standards of the legal field and the Law Reviews publications.
- (b) Citations must be accurate, complete, and correctly formatted. Essays that fail to meet citation requirements will be subject to penalties, which will be reflected in the scoring of the submissions, to uphold the competition's academic standards.

Section 3.06 Originality Requirements

- (a) Essays must be entirely original and unpublished at the time of submission. This rule ensures that participants present new and unique perspectives, enhancing the overall quality of the competition.
- (b) Submissions that have been previously submitted to other competitions or published elsewhere will not be considered. Essays violating this rule will be disqualified to maintain fairness and encourage genuine contributions.

Section 3.07 Apolitical Content

- (a) Submissions must avoid advocating specific political ideologies. This rule ensures that the competition remains focused on legal scholarship rather than political advocacy, aligning with the mission of the Law Review as a whole.
- (b) Essays should focus on scholarly legal analysis and remain neutral in tone and content. Any essay that breaches this requirement will be disqualified to maintain the competition's academic integrity.

Section 3.08 Formatting Guidelines

- (a) Essays must be written in Century Schoolbook font to maintain a professional and uniform appearance, ensuring readability and remaining consistent with the formatting requirements of ELSA IE.
- (b) The font size used throughout the essay must be 12-point to ensure readability and consistency, reflecting standard academic formatting practices.
- (c) Line spacing for the body of the essay must be set to 1.5 to allow for clear separation of text, facilitating easier review by evaluators.
- (d) The Essays and paragraphs must be justified to ensure consistency with the academic formatting requirements.
- (e) Each essay must include a separate cover page containing the following details:
 - (i) the essay title;
 - (ii) the author's full name;
 - (iii) the author's email address;
 - (iv) the submission date; and
 - (v) the total word count of the submission.

Section 3.09 Submission Format

- (a) Essays must be submitted via email to the designated email address of the Law Review; lawreview.ieuniversity@es.elsa.org. This submission method ensures efficient handling and tracking of all entries.
- (b) All submissions must be in PDF format to preserve the formatting and prevent alterations.

Section 3.10 Submission Deadline

- (a) All essays must be submitted by the deadline specified in the competition announcement. This rule ensures that the competition can proceed according to schedule and that all participants are treated fairly.
- (b) Late submissions will not be accepted or considered under any circumstances, reinforcing the importance of time management and adherence to rules.
- (c) Participants are advised to plan accordingly to meet the deadline and avoid disqualification.

Section 3.11 Review Process

- (a) All essays will be reviewed by a panel of faculty experts. This ensures a thorough and impartial evaluation process that upholds the highest academic standards.
- (b) The evaluation process will adhere to rigorous standards of fairness, impartiality, and academic excellence, ensuring that each submission is judged solely on its merits.
- (c) The panel's decision on winning entries will be final and binding, providing clarity and finality to the competition outcomes.

- (d) The Final Decisions of the Panel will not be subject to appeal under any circumstances.

Section 3.12 Prizes and Publication

- (a) The first-place winner will receive a prize equivalent to 75 EUR. This reward acknowledges the participant's excellence and encourages high-quality submissions.
- (b) The publication of the Winning Essay in the Law Review volume will be at the discretion of the Law Review Board.
- (c) For the purposes of the decision on official publication of the Winning Essay, it will first be reviewed by the Executive Board, and if the Executive Board unanimously agrees that the essay meets the standards for publication, the full Law Review Board will then make a simple majority decision to approve publication.
- (d) Essays submitted by the second and third-place winners may also be considered for publication, subject to Editorial Review and approval.
- (e) This process ensures that only essays of the highest quality are published while maintaining fairness and transparency.

Section 3.13 Publication Rights

- (a) Authors of the Winning Essays selected for publication must transfer exclusive publication rights to the ELSA IE Law Review. This ensures that the publication retains control over the content and maintains its professional standards.
- (b) The Law Review will ensure proper attribution and credit to the author in all published versions, highlighting their contribution and supporting their academic or professional growth.