LexTemporis explained: grading legal rules-as-code against real records, not another reading of the law

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Short answer: LexTemporis is a method, posted to arXiv on 18 November 2026, for checking legal rules written as programs against records of what actually happened, instead of against answers written by someone who read the same law. Using 10,901 firm-years of SME status disclosed by Korean listed companies, the author finds that transitional provisions change outcomes and that grading against one reader's interpretation can overstate how well a program works. It is a preprint.

TL;DR The short version

- LexTemporis checks legal rules written as code against records of what actually happened, not against another person's reading of the law.
- Using 10,901 firm-years of Korean SME status, the author finds that transitional provisions change outcomes.
- Grading against one interpretation can overstate accuracy, so version rules by effective date and test them against historical outcomes.

Read online, listen to it, or change the text size: https://blogs.iictp.org/lextemporis-executable-legal-rules-graded-against-records-explained

What is LexTemporis?

Laws are increasingly turned into programs that decide cases, for instance whether a firm was a small or medium enterprise on a given date, and LLMs now write them. The abstract's point is that such programs are usually graded against reference answers from a reader of the same law, so a program can score well by sharing the grader's interpretation rather than by being right.

How it works

- It grades rules against 10,901 firm-years of SME status disclosed by Korean listed companies, with every version of the governing rules.
- An appendix adds comparison cases from US income tax and German hospital minimum volumes.
- Four LLMs wrote the rules, each given different selections of the law, in a pre-registered comparison.

Results reported by the author

- The date changes outcomes mainly through provisions outside the main statutory text; one transitional provision raises agreement with the disclosures from 83 to 86% up to 89 to 90%.
- Where readings of a contested provision diverge, the disclosures favour the author's reading in 130 of 189 firm-years.
- No condition was better across all four models in the pre-registered comparison.
- Grading against the grader's own reading can overstate performance, the abstract concludes.

Limitations and open questions

- This is an arXiv preprint. It has not been peer reviewed, and its numbers are the authors' own claims.
- One national setting dominates; the other jurisdictions are appendix comparisons.
- Disclosures by firms are records, but they are not infallible, and some exploratory analyses are labelled as such.
- We read the abstract only.

How to apply the idea, step by step

1. Version your rules by effective date, including transitional provisions.
2. Test them against historical outcomes, not only against a reference reading.
3. Keep a list of contested provisions and the reading you chose.
4. Re-run tests when a rule version changes.

What it means for rules-as-code and compliance teams

The lesson is about evidence: an independent record beats a second opinion that may share your assumptions. Related reading on testing AI outputs is in how to evaluate an LLM application.

Frequently asked questions

- **What is rules-as-code?** Writing legal rules as executable programs that decide cases.
- **What is the main caution?** Grading code against the same reader's interpretation can overstate accuracy.
- **Is it peer reviewed?** No. It is an arXiv preprint.

Related reading

- How to evaluate an LLM application
- SG-LegalClarify benchmark
- What is idempotency?
- Certified Technical Practitioner

Sources and currency

Sources were read on 23 November 2026. Products, rules and standards change, so check the linked originals before you rely on any detail.

Related credential: Certified Technical Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. Jinhyung Bae. Grading Executable Legal Rules Against Independent Records: Transitional Provisions and Korean SME Status. arXiv 2611.24055, 18 November 2026. arxiv.org/abs/2611.24055. Preprint.

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