



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA
PRESS RELEASE

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**LAW SOCIETY CALLS ON COUNCIL ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO CONSULT THE
LEGAL PROFESSION ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE LLB DEGREE**

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) questions the decision by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) not to include the legal profession in its review of the LLB degree.

The CHE has recently published the outcomes of its review of the LLB degree, on 12 April 2017. The LSSA has invited the CHE to consult the legal profession on issues relating to the LLB curriculum. Also, it has offered its support and its commitment to law faculties which may require input and assistance from the attorneys' profession to ensure their LLB degrees achieve full accreditation by the CHE.

'We deem it critical to the attorneys' profession to ensure that law graduates are effectively prepared to enter the profession and to serve the public professionally and efficiently. It is also critical that law students currently in the system are assured of the relevance and practicality of their degrees,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons Walid Brown and David Bekker.

Although the LSSA was asked for input in the standards-drafting process aspect of the review, it expresses serious concerns that it has not been consulted on the process since 2015. 'The legal profession is a material stakeholder and represents the largest group of employers of law graduates, with up to 60% of law graduates joining the attorneys' profession,' say Mr Brown and Mr Bekker.

The LSSA, together with the South Africa Law Deans Association and the General Council of the Bar of South Africa, initiated the LLB review process following a summit they hosted on the LLB degree, held on 29 May 2013. This was after concern was expressed at the skills gap presented by law graduates when entering the legal profession. Following that summit, the stakeholders resolved to request the CHE to conduct a standard-setting process for the LLB degree. In conducting this exercise, the CHE was requested to consult widely with the LLB Summit Steering Committee of the profession established after the summit.

Mr Brown and Mr Bekker note: 'It is accordingly difficult to understand how the profession can be sidelined by the CHE at this critical juncture in the process.'

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA, WALID BROWN AND DAVID BEKKER

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Editor's note:

The Law Society of South Africa brings together its six constituent members – the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers – in representing South Africa's 25 000 attorneys and 5 600 candidate attorneys.