

Law Society of South Africa

**Recommendation to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development
in terms of section 97(1)(a)(v) of the Legal Practice Act, 28 of 2014**

Regulations made under section 26(1)(c) of the Legal Practice Act, 28 of 2014

Practical vocational training requirements for candidate legal practitioners

1. Duration of practical vocational training

- 1.1 Any person intending to be admitted and enrolled as a candidate legal practitioner must -
- 1.1.1 serve under a practical vocational training contract for a period of twelve months after that person has satisfied all the requirements for a degree referred to in sections 26(1)(a) or (b) of the Act; and
- 1.1.2 complete, to the satisfaction of the Council, during the service under a practical vocational training contract or within a period of not longer than twelve months after the termination of the practical vocational training contract, a full time period of structured course work, comprising compulsory modules on specific topics of not less than 400 notional hours duration in the aggregate over a period of not longer than six months.
- 1.2 For purposes of regulation 1.1.2 a notional hour of structured course work shall mean the notional duration allocated by the Council to a learning activity to be undertaken by a student to achieve a specified learning outcome, irrespective of the actual time taken by the individual to achieve that outcome.
- 1.3 The course of structured course work may be completed during the period of service under a practical vocational training contract, or separately therefrom, but a candidate legal practitioner may not embark on a course of structured course work before he or she has entered into a practical vocational training contract.
- 1.4 Subject to the provision of the Act, any period of service before the candidate has satisfied the requirements of the degrees referred to in regulation 1.1.1 shall not be regarded as good or sufficient service in terms of a practical vocational training contract, unless the Council otherwise determines in any particular case.

1.5 The Council may, on application and on good cause shown, and subject to such conditions as the Council may impose, reduce the duration of practical vocational training in any particular case.

2. Regulation of practical vocational training

2.1 The training of candidate legal practitioner, and service under a practical vocational training contract, shall be regulated by rules made by the Council from time to time.

2.2 Course work and workplace training must be in compliance with standards determined from time to time by the Council in the rules.

3. By whom candidate legal practitioners may be engaged

3.1 Candidate attorneys

3.1.1 A candidate attorney may be engaged or retained under a practical vocational training contract only -

3.1.1.1 by a person practising the profession of an attorney for his own account;

3.1.1.2 by a person practising the profession of an attorney as a partner in a firm of attorneys;

3.1.1.3 by a person practising the profession of an attorney as a member of a juristic entity;

3.1.1.4 by a person practising the profession of an attorney as State Attorney or as Deputy State Attorney in the office of the State Attorney or any branch thereof;

3.1.1.5 by a person practising the profession of an attorney if he or she is an attorney who has practised as a professional assistant in a firm for a period of five years within the preceding six years;

3.1.1.6 by a registered legal practitioner in the full time employ of a legal aid institution which has been approved by the Council for the purpose of engaging candidate legal practitioners and who is responsible for supervising the training of candidate legal practitioners so engaged; or;

3.1.1.7 by a registered legal practitioner in the full time employ of any other institution approved by the Council for the purpose of engaging

candidate legal practitioners and who is responsible for supervising the training of candidate legal practitioners so engaged.

- 3.1.2 The person engaging the candidate attorney, as contemplated in regulation 3.1, must -
- 3.1.2.1 if that person is an attorney, save in the case of an attorney referred to in regulation 3.1.1.5, have practised as an attorney for a period of not less than three years, or for periods of not less than three years in the aggregate during the preceding four years;
- 3.1.2.2 in the case of an attorney referred to in regulation 3.1.1.5, have practised for the period specified in that regulation;
- 3.1.2.3 in the case of a registered legal practitioner referred to in regulations 3.1.1.6 and 3.1.1.7 who is an advocate, have practised in that capacity for a period of not less than three years, or for periods of not less than three years in the aggregate during the preceding four years.
- 3.1.3 Service by a candidate attorney to any legal practitioner while that legal practitioner is not practising the profession as described in regulation 3.1.1 shall not be deemed to be good or sufficient service for purposes of these regulations.
- 3.1.4 An attorney shall at no time have more than three candidate attorneys (and in the case of attorneys employed by entities referred to in regulations 3.1.1.6 and 3.1.1.7, six candidate attorneys or pupils in the aggregate) engaged or retained in terms of a practical vocational training contract: provided that -
- 3.1.4.1 on the death or retirement from practice of any attorney (or legal practitioner in the case of entities referred to in regulations 3.1.1.6, 3.1.1.7, 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3) any of his or her surviving or remaining partners, any member of the commercial juristic entity of which he or she was a member, or any other person who as a legal practitioner is employed full time at the entity concerned; or
- 3.1.4.2 where an attorney has been debarred by the Council from continuing with a practical vocational training contract, any of his or her partners, any other member of the commercial juristic entity of which he or she is a member or (in the case of entities referred to in regulations 3.1.1.6 and

3.1.1.7) any other person who as a legal practitioner who is employed full time at the entity concerned

may take cession of the practical vocational training contract of the candidate attorney, despite the fact that the cessionary may then have more than three candidate attorneys (or more than six candidate attorneys, as the case may be) under contract.

3.2 Pupils

3.2.1 A pupil may be engaged or retained under a practical vocational training contract only -

3.2.1.1 by an admitted advocate in practice;

3.2.1.2 by a registered legal practitioner in the full time employ of a legal aid institution which has been approved by the Council for the purpose of engaging candidate legal practitioners and who is responsible for supervising the training of candidate legal practitioners so engaged; or

3.2.1.3 by a registered legal practitioner in the full time employ of any other institution approved by the Council for the purpose of engaging candidate legal practitioners and who is responsible for supervising the training of candidate legal practitioners so engaged.

3.2.2 The person engaging the pupil, as contemplated in regulation 3.2.1 must -

3.2.2.1 if that person is an advocate, have practised in that capacity for a period not less than three years, or for periods of not less than three years in the aggregate during the preceding four years; or

3.2.2.2 in the case of a registered legal practitioner referred to in regulations 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3 who is an advocate, have practised in that capacity for a period of not less than three years, or for periods of not less than three years in the aggregate during the preceding four years.

3.2.3 Service by a pupil to a legal practitioner while that legal practitioner is not practising the profession as described in regulation 3.2.2.1 shall not be deemed to be good or sufficient service for purposes of these regulations.

3.2.4 An advocate shall at no time have more than one pupil (and in the case of advocates employed by entities referred to in regulations 3.1.16, 3.1.1.7,

3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3, six candidate attorneys or pupils in the aggregate) engaged or retained in terms of a practical vocational training contract: provided that on the death or retirement from practice of an advocate or in the event of an advocate being debarred by the Council from continuing with a practical vocational training contract, any other qualifying advocate may take session of the practical vocational training contract of the pupil for the period of the contract still remaining.

4. **Course work**

4.1 The course work programme to be attended by candidate legal practitioners shall comprise all of the following modules, attendance of which will be compulsory for candidate legal practitioners intending to be admitted as legal practitioners:

4.1.1 legal accounting for legal practitioners:

4.1.1.1 special legal accounting for advocates (pupils only, other than pupils wishing to be admitted as advocates referred to in section 34(2)(b) of the Act);

4.1.1.2 special legal accounting for attorneys and for advocates referred to in section 34(2)(b) of the Act;

4.1.2 advocacy skills, including trial and motion court proceedings;

4.1.3 alternative dispute resolution;

4.1.4 civil procedure;

4.1.5 criminal procedure;

4.1.6 professional conduct and legal ethics;

4.1.7 legal writing and drafting.

4.1.8 constitution of law and customary law;

4.1.9 information and communication technology for practice, and associated aspects of cyber law;

4.1.10 administration of estates.

4.2 The hours to be devoted to each of the modules referred to in regulation 4.1 by a candidate legal practitioner shall be as determined from time to time by the Council,

but the aggregate duration of attendance on modules by a candidate attorney or a pupil shall be not less than 400 notional hours.

- 4.3 Any module of course work may be presented through lectures, seminars or any forms of learning requiring the physical presence of a candidate legal practitioner, or in appropriate circumstances may be presented through approved distance-learning method or digital transmission, telephone or video conference link, audio-tape or electronic network. Course work may be presented during working hours or after hours.
- 4.4 All providers of structured course work for purposes of practical vocational training must be accredited by the Council and must have an appropriate level of experience to be able to impart knowledge and skills to candidate legal practitioners.
- 4.5 If a candidate legal practitioner fails to complete, to the satisfaction of the Council, a full time period of structured course work, as required in regulation 1.1.2, within a period of three years after the date of registration of a practical vocational training contract, he or she will be required to repeat the course work program to enable him or her to qualify for admission as a legal practitioner.

5. **Assessment**

Candidate legal practitioners will be subject to continuing assessment during their periods of practical vocational training, in relation to both their attendance at the course work program and during their service under a practical vocational training contract, in accordance with procedures determined by the Council. Any such assessment shall be in addition to, and apart from, the assessment of candidate legal practitioners as contemplated in section 28 of the Act.