

CONSULTATION PAPER

REVIEW OF PRACTICAL LEGAL TRAINING

APRIL 2026

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1. Chair's foreword

Practical legal training (**PLT**) is the critical bridge between completion of a law degree and entering supervised legal practice. In recent years, there has been growing interest in considering how effectively PLT has been fulfilling that role.

The requirements for PLT have not been reviewed and updated for some time and do not align with contemporary expectations of lawyers who are ready to begin their legal careers. Concerns have also been raised about the cost and quality of PLT delivery, which for many providers has moved primarily online in recent years.

Concerns about PLT were given national prominence by the Hon Andrew Bell AC, Chief Justice of New South Wales, in a speech in January 2025.¹ There then followed a detailed survey of the New South Wales legal profession conducted under the auspices of the New South Wales Legal Profession Admission Board, which has led to the development of a detailed discussion paper and Interim Report, and immediate practical steps being taken in New South Wales to address some of the issues that were identified.

In 2025, the Legal Services Council's Admissions Committee and the Legal Admissions Consultative Committee began a national review of PLT, particularly considering issues of cost and quality, to develop and consult on proposals for national reform. To support this work, the Legal Services Council engaged an independent research agency, Urbis, to survey the legal profession about PLT.

The survey results showed us that, with very limited exceptions, there is widespread dissatisfaction with PLT among both graduates and supervisors. There is a need to address the structure and content of PLT coursework. While workplace experience was the most positively regarded component of PLT, there are opportunities to enhance this aspect of the training. The survey results also provide useful feedback on how important specific legal skills and values are to entry-level lawyers and how supervisors think they are being demonstrated.

The Committees wish to acknowledge the significant contribution that Chief Justice Bell and the New South Wales Legal Profession Admission Board have made to this work through the New South Wales review of PLT.

The Committees are looking forward to hearing your views on options for reform. The scope of this review is significant and we are keen to ensure that we hear from lawyers,

¹ Available on the [New South Wales Supreme Court website](#).

regulators and others from all around Australia on the potential benefits and impacts of reform options. Thank you for helping us with this important work.



The Hon Justice François Kunc

Chair of the Admissions Committee

Chair of the Law Admissions Consultative Committee

2. Executive Summary

High quality legal education and training is essential for the effective operation of the justice system and to protect consumers of legal services. Practical legal training (**PLT**) is the bridge between academic study of the law and legal practice. PLT is meant to prepare law students to enter practice and is required before law graduates can seek admission as a lawyer.

The current model of PLT is set out in the PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers² (**PLT Competency Standards**) which “describe the observable performance in several key areas relating to legal practice, required of entry-level lawyers at the point of admission to the legal profession.”³ PLT students are required to undertake both coursework and workplace experience. The requirements for coursework are detailed and include general skills and values training, three compulsory practice areas and a choice of two optional practice areas. Fifteen days of workplace experience are also required, although some PLT providers require more. PLT is required to be delivered at a graduate diploma level or equivalent, which takes around 6 to 12 months.

Once law graduates have completed PLT and are admitted, they are subject to a period of supervised legal practice which is imposed as a condition on their practising certificate. There is little guidance in the current regulatory schemes about how this period should operate and what is expected of supervisors.

The results of the 2025 national survey of the legal profession show that there is widespread dissatisfaction with PLT, among both graduates and supervisors. A survey of the legal profession in New South Wales, undertaken separately, had similar findings. Graduates are concerned that PLT is too long, too expensive and does not prepare them to enter legal practice. Supervisors expressed the view that PLT was not effective in bridging the gap between academic study and legal practice, and reported that skills such as drafting, negotiation, client advice, file management and business practice were demonstrated rarely or only sometimes by early career lawyers.

Additionally, concerns have been raised that focusing on practical training as a distinct phase might undermine opportunities for practical knowledge and skills to be delivered throughout the spectrum of legal education. For example, there are no current requirements for law courses to provide students with practical knowledge and skills.

² Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers](#).

³ *Ibid*, 3.

Results from the national survey and other feedback suggest that the most effective legal training takes place ‘on the job’, when early career lawyers are working in practice. Two-thirds of supervisor respondents to the national survey agreed that there is a need for curriculum-based training for early career lawyers, with several reflecting on the importance of ‘on the job’ training and experience in the development of practitioners starting their career. In contrast, the PLT Competency Standards require students to undertake training prior to admission in practice areas that may not be relevant to their chosen field of practice and do not provide optional practice areas that are directly relevant to many emerging areas of practice.

These concerns suggest that there is an opportunity to re-evaluate the requirements of PLT and consider where those requirements are best placed in the legal education continuum. This recognises that law courses and the initial period of supervised practice are part of the solution to improve outcomes for law students, the profession and consumers.

The Committees consider that it is important that any reforms to PLT are implemented in all states and territories, to maintain national consistency in the requirements for admission. The loss of national consistency in this area may have adverse consequences, such as encouraging forum shopping between jurisdictions by students seeking admission and creating different educational requirements for graduates in different states and territories. It may have an impact on the mutual recognition provisions that are currently in place, as set out below, and create difficulties for law practices that operate in multiple jurisdictions. Different PLT requirements in different jurisdictions may also have unintended cost consequences by requiring PLT providers to develop multiple programs (with the additional cost passed through to graduates) and/or program development costs being borne by a smaller base of graduates if there were a jurisdiction specific course.

Drawing on the work undertaken by the New South Wales Legal Profession Admission Board, the Legal Services Council’s Admissions Committee and the Law Admissions Consultative Committee have proposed reforms to PLT that cover the full legal training spectrum, from law school through to supervised practice. These proposals include a shorter list of core skills required for admission and recognise that these capabilities can begin to develop within the law degree itself and during PLT. Development of other practical skills and knowledge would be undertaken during the post-admission period, allowing new lawyers to learn these skills while supervised. This approach spreads practical training over a longer timeframe to strengthen early learning and support continued development after admission.

This paper seeks your feedback on proposals that would:

- require university law courses to teach and assess identified practical skills and knowledge
- establish a shorter PLT program that focuses on identified practical skills and knowledge, to be completed prior to admission
- impose a requirement for 15 days of workplace experience, to be completed prior to admission
- implement new structured and assessed post-admission legal training to be undertaken by early career lawyers in the first two years of practice (which will focus on specific areas of legal practice)
- improve the supervision framework for early career lawyers.

The Committees are also seeking your feedback on potential ways to expand clinical legal education as a method of enhancing legal education and address areas of unmet legal need in the community.

These proposals, and consultation questions, are set out in more detail below **(Section 6)**.

The implementation of these proposals would be a significant change to the delivery of PLT and the market for current providers. It is anticipated that many current providers will shift their course offerings to provide an adjusted PLT course and some may wish to also be involved in the delivery of post-admission legal training. The Committees welcome feedback on these potential impacts of the proposals.

CURRENT REQUIREMENTS: LEGAL EDUCATION

What law graduates must complete before entering supervised legal practice

LAW DEGREE

Minimum three years

Priestley 11 subjects + electives

PLT COURSEWORK

Length appropriate to a graduate diploma or at least 450 hours
In person or online

Skills + values
Practice areas (3 x compulsory +
2 x optional)

PLT WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

Minimum 15 days
Must occur after or concurrently with PLT coursework

ADMISSION TO PRACTICE

SUPERVISED LEGAL PRACTICE

Work under supervision (two years)

CPD

Annual requirements for continuing professional development

UNRESTRICTED PRACTICING CERTIFICATE

KEY ISSUES

- PLT is too long and costly
- Limited practical skill development
- Overly detailed competency framework
- Higher satisfaction reported where PLT is delivered in person.

PROPOSED REQUIREMENTS: LEGAL EDUCATION

Practical skills in law degrees + shorter PLT + structured post-admission training (PALT)

LAW DEGREE (ENHANCED PRACTICAL SKILLS)

Minimum three years

Priestley 11 subjects + electives
Includes teaching and assessment of
practical knowledge and skills

SHORTER PLT COURSEWORK

4 weeks in person program + 1 week
pre reading
Delivered in person, or synchronous
online delivery in exceptional cases

Skills + values

PLT WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

Minimum 15 days
May take into account work experience completed during law degree

ADMISSION TO PRACTICE

SUPERVISED LEGAL PRACTICE

Work under supervision (two
years)
Possible additional practice
restrictions

NEW POST ADMISSION LEGAL TRAINING (PALT)

15 hours per year for the first
two years of practice
Delivered in person, or
synchronous online delivery in
exceptional cases
Providers approved by state/
territory regulators

CPD

Annual requirements for
continuing professional
development (unchanged)

UNRESTRICTED PRACTICING CERTIFICATE

KEY BENEFITS

- Practical skills development starts earlier
- PLT is shorter, less expensive, and more focused
- In-person delivery enhances engagement
- Additional training in practice areas after admission, once working in practice.

3. Introduction

About us

The Legal Services Council is a statutory body that oversees the operation of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (**Uniform Law**) in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

The Legal Services Council's Admissions Committee develops the Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules and provides advice to the Council about admissions matters.⁴

The Legal Admissions Consultative Committee (**LACC**) is a national group that reports to the Council of Chief Justices of Australia and New Zealand. The LACC's main role is to forge consensus on admission and admission-related matters nationally, between the bodies represented by its members. The LACC has developed a number of policy frameworks that underpin admission requirements in each jurisdiction.⁵ The Legal Services Council provides the LACC with secretariat support.

The Admissions Committee and the LACC (**the Committees**) work closely together to facilitate national consistency in admissions matters.

About this review

Objectives and guiding principles

In 2025, the Committees resolved to convene as a subcommittee to lead a review of PLT. They noted that this review may cover accreditation, competencies and skills and will incorporate issues of cost and quality.

The identified objectives of this project were to:

1. undertake a national review of PLT, particularly incorporating issues of cost and quality
2. develop and consult on proposals to amend the regulatory framework to the extent necessary to give effect to the recommendations of the review.

⁴ For more information about the Admissions Committee, see the Legal Services Council's [website](#).

⁵ For more information about the LACC, see the Legal Services Council's [website](#).

The Committees identified the following principles to guide the conduct of the review:

- identify what is required for new lawyers to be ready to enter supervised legal practice across the range of contemporary practice environments
- maintain national consistency through the local application of agreed regulatory standards
- avoid barriers which could reduce the accessibility of PLT and admission to practice.

In April 2025, the Committees shared these objectives and principles with stakeholders and received feedback, including about additional areas for inclusion. The Committees noted that many of the areas suggested for inclusion in the review could be considered within the scope of the objectives. These include:

- how to best prepare law graduates for legal practice and the role and purpose of PLT
- how and when PLT should be delivered
- how the requirements of the PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers (**PLT Competency Standards**) impact the cost and quality of PLT
- value and accessibility of PLT
- online delivery, technology and artificial intelligence (**AI**)
- consideration of learning outcomes and the quality of workplace experience
- a regulatory framework that supports competition and innovation.

Stakeholders also raised the important role of legal education in protecting consumers of legal services and queried whether reimagined PLT could contribute to access to justice and address areas of unmet legal need.

Context of the review

PLT emerged as early as the 1970s as the bridge between a law course and legal practice, replacing or operating as an alternative to the previous articles of clerkship.⁶

The PLT Competency Standards were developed by the LACC and the Australasian Profession Legal Education Community Ltd (**APLEC**)⁷. The Standards sought to describe the observable performance in key areas of legal practice required of entry-

⁶ Rob Litley and Christina Do, “What Should an ‘Entry-level lawyer’ look like in a post-COVID world?” (2022) 1 Western Australian Law Teachers’ Review at 19, 21.

⁷ APLEC is made up of PLT providers from around Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. More information about APLEC is available on its [website](#).

level lawyers at the point of admission to the legal profession.⁸ The Standards were first endorsed for use by the admitting authorities in 2002 and revised in 2014 and 2017.

A changing profession

Since the PLT Competency Standards were first introduced, the legal profession and the way that it works have undergone significant change.

The legal profession itself is larger and more diverse, with more female practitioners and an increased proportion of solicitors at both ends of the age spectrum.⁹ The work that lawyers do is increasingly specialised¹⁰ and there has been a shift in existing areas of practice.¹¹

The way that lawyers work is also changing. Adoption of technology and remote work was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic¹² and recent challenges have arisen in relation to the increasing use of AI. Recent disciplinary cases and publications by regulators highlight the importance of training lawyers to use new technologies ethically and in accordance with their professional duties.¹³

Additionally, there have been calls to ensure that lawyers have a level of social and cultural competency and are trained to respond to a range of situations, including working with interpreters, trauma-informed responses to violence and cultural awareness when working with clients.

It is helpful to understand where risks in legal practice may arise. In New South Wales, claims made against lawyers have been decreasing, relative to the number of legal practices. In New South Wales, the top five causes of claims were:

1. poor communication with clients (37%)
2. not knowing the law adequately (21%)
3. document problems (18%)
4. systems problems (16%)
5. other (8%).¹⁴

⁸ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers](#).

⁹ [2024 National Profile of Solicitors](#) (13 June 2025) at 1.

¹⁰ Professor Sally Kift and Kana Nakano, [Reimagining the Professional Regulation of Australian Legal Education](#), 2021 at 52.

¹¹ [2024 Annual Profile of NSW Solicitors](#) (17 April 2025).

¹² Rob Lilley and Christina Do, “What Should an ‘Entry-level lawyer’ look like in a post-COVID world?” (2022) 1 *Western Australian Law Teachers’ Review* at 19, 21.

¹³ For example, see the Statement issued by the Law Society of New South Wales, Legal Practice Board of Western Australia and Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner on [The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Australian Legal Practice](#).

¹⁴ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Discussion Paper on PLT Reform](#) (30 September 2025) at 26-27, 156.

Lawcover also noted that the evolving risk of future claims were to be found in cyber assisted fraud, Anti-Money Laundering/Counter-Terrorism Financing legislation, use of generative AI and supervision of junior lawyers.

The Committees have also sought insights from insurers in other jurisdictions.

In respect of the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, Lawcover has noted that proportions in relation to claims by practice areas and the underlying causes of claims vary slightly between jurisdictions, but the broad trends remain the same. Given the change in work practices, particularly hybrid working, Lawcover has concerns that some early career lawyers are not being closely supervised. While claims arising from failure to supervise have not increased in volume, Lawcover's risk management continues to focus on this area to ensure that both supervising solicitors and early career lawyers are aware of the potential risks with remote work.

In Western Australia and South Australia, there has also been a lower trend in claims numbers. In South Australia, the issues referred to Law Claims mirror those issues referred to Lawcover in New South Wales. In Western Australia, the top five causes of claims in 2024/25 included managing client expectations and lack of supervision of junior staff.

In Victoria, the Legal Practitioners' Liability Committee provided the Committees with information about the following areas of risk in respect of early career lawyers:

1. Generative AI creates a risk of inaccurate research (fabrication, hallucination or incorrect context) which results in incorrect advice, particularly for early career lawyers who do not have the experience to 'sense test' the AI generated content.
2. Remote working arrangements and reduced in person contact with clients and courts can impact an early career lawyer's opportunity to learn by observation. It also reduces the environment for collegiate interaction and the opportunity to build professional relationships and support networks.
3. Supervision is often seen as part of a work production process which is focussed on efficiency and output (such as quick marked up correction to get the work out) and not as an opportunity to mentor and teach early career lawyers.
4. Competent practitioners have usually developed numerous soft skills such as effective communication, time management, retainer management and the confidence to say 'no'. These skills are often learnt by observation and

guidance in practice. Early career lawyers need support and mentoring in the workplace to develop these skills.

New South Wales Legal Profession Admission Board review

The review of PLT by the Admissions Committee and the LACC has been undertaken in parallel with the work by the New South Wales Legal Profession Admission Board (**NSW LPAB**) to review PLT. The NSW LPAB review surveyed legal practitioners about their experience of PLT in early 2025¹⁵ and published a discussion paper on options for reform in September 2025.¹⁶ The NSW LPAB published an Interim Report on 13 March 2026.¹⁷

The proposed reforms to PLT developed in New South Wales would affect training in law courses, PLT and after admission in the following ways:

- University law courses would be required to teach basic practical skills in the [Prescribed Academic Areas of Knowledge](#) (commonly referred to as the “Priestley 11”) or in other compulsory courses or units
- There would be a shorter capstone PLT program that is taught in person and focuses on the identified core practical legal skills set out in Annexure A to the Interim Report. This course would initially be four weeks in length, together with up to a week’s pre-reading and viewing of preparatory materials.
- The requirement for 15 days of verified workplace experience would be retained, which could be satisfied during or after a law degree through paralegal work, internships, clerkships or community legal work.
- Post-admission legal training (**PALT**) would require newly admitted lawyers, over their first two years of practice, to complete at least 15 hours of annual training in the form of structured, in-person practical legal training modules. These would be chosen in consultation with supervising lawyers, aligned with the practice areas chosen by the entry-level lawyer, and include meaningful assessments.

The NSW LPAB proposes that this new model should start in 2028.

In addition to the ongoing policy work, from 2026, the NSW LPAB has required PLT providers to deliver at least three weeks of in person learning as part of a PLT course and has emphasised that the workplace experience requirement is 15 days (not more, as some PLT providers had been incorporating).

¹⁵ Urbis, [The Legal Profession’s Experience of Practical Legal Training](#) (2025).

¹⁶ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Discussion Paper on PLT Reform](#) (30 September 2025) at 8.

¹⁷ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Interim Report on PLT Reform](#) (13 March 2026).

The proposals in this this paper are substantially similar to those proposed by the NSW LPAB. The intention is to consult on those proposals at a national level to maintain national consistency in law school, PLT and post-admission requirements.

Other recent reviews and research

The Committees acknowledge other recent research on legal education and training, including the research commissioned by Queensland Law Society into assessing the job readiness of law graduates and newly admitted lawyers entering private practice (published in 2023),¹⁸ and the reference group established by the Council of Australian Law Deans to consider the future of legal education, following the delivery of the research report prepared by Professor Sally Kift and Kana Nakano on legal education.¹⁹

Call for submissions

The Admissions Committee and the LACC invite public comment on the proposals arising from the review of PLT.

The Committees would be grateful for your responses to the consultation questions by **Thursday 14 May 2026**. Feedback can be sent to submissions@legalservicescouncil.org.au.

To assist you with providing your views, a feedback form has been published with this consultation paper. Please feel free to use this form, or to provide your submissions in another format.

Your submission will be shared with the Admissions Committee, LACC and Legal Services Council.

Unless you advise us otherwise, your submission may also be published on the Legal Services Council's website and shared with other organisations that contribute to this consultation.

¹⁸ Queensland Law Society, [The Job Readiness of Law Graduates and Entry Level Solicitors in Private Practice](#) (2022).

¹⁹ Professor Sally Kift and Kana Nakano, [Reimagining the Professional Regulation of Australian Legal Education](#) (2021) at 52.

4. Overview of legal education and training

4.1 PLT in the continuum of legal education

It is important to consider the role of PLT in the context of legal education and training throughout a legal practitioner's career. Legal education in Australia functions as a staged developmental spectrum, as illustrated below.

01

LAW COURSE

- Includes study of the prescribed academic areas of knowledge (Priestley 11)
- Three years of study
- Providers are accredited by the local admitting authority.

02

PLT

- Development of skills and values for practice
- Equivalent to a graduate diploma in length
- Fifteen days of workplace experience
- Providers are accredited by the local admitting authority.

03

ADMISSION TO PRACTICE OBTAIN PRACTISING CERTIFICATE

04

SUPERVISED LEGAL PRACTICE

- New solicitors are generally subject to a statutory condition on their practising certificate to engage in supervised legal practice for two years
- All work must be done under supervision.

05

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- To hold a practising certificate, all lawyers must complete annual CPD.

06

ADDITIONAL TRAINING AS REQUIRED

- Practice Management Course required to move to Principal or unrestricted practising certificate in most jurisdictions
- Option for practitioners to undertake specialist accreditation programs.

These stages form an integrated lifecycle of legal capability development — from initial academic grounding to supervised practice, and ultimately, to continuous learning and professional specialisation.

Throughout Australia, local legal practitioners are required to be both admitted to the legal profession and licensed to practise law. The requirements for admission and licensing are similar across all states and territories, which is essential to the success of the mutual recognition arrangements under the legal profession legislation²⁰ and the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Cth).

To support consistency in requirements for admission, the LACC has developed a national framework for admission which has been adopted by each state and territory. For New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, the framework is adopted through the Uniform Law and Uniform Admission Rules. In other states and territories, it is adopted through local legislation and rules. **Appendix A** provides an overview of the admission requirements and their source in each state and territory. In some jurisdictions, there are local variations in the adoption of the LACC framework.²¹

While there is no equivalent body for post-admission legal education and training, those requirements are broadly consistent around Australia.

Appendix B contains information on which bodies have regulatory responsibilities in relation to admission and licensing in each state and territory.

4.2 Academic qualifications

Purpose

University legal education provides the architecture upon which professional competence is built. It equips students with core analytical capabilities — statutory interpretation, case analysis, legal reasoning and engagement with legal theory — while introducing them to the major doctrinal areas that define the structure of the Australian legal system.

This academic foundation is indispensable, however, university programs are not designed to teach the day-to-day competencies required for responsible client-facing work, including managing files, exercising professional judgement under real-world

²⁰ See *Legal Profession Uniform Law*, ss 6 (definition of Australian legal practitioner), 43 (see also s 25); *Legal Profession Act 2006* (ACT), ss 8, 34; *Legal Profession Act 2007* (NT), ss 6, 45; *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld) 3. ss 6, 44; *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Tas), s 6, 40; *Legal Practitioners Act 1981* (SA), see s 21(1).

²¹ For example, in Tasmania there are some differences to the way the PLT requirements are set out. The optional practice areas are broken into two groups, with students to select one elective from each, and they do not include Banking and Finance. The workplace experience requirement is 90 hours instead of 15 days.

constraints, dealing with clients from diverse backgrounds, drafting clear and effective legal documents, or navigating the ethical dimensions of practice in dynamic environments.

As a result, university study alone does not produce graduates who are immediately equipped for safe, effective and ethical legal practice.

Australia produces approximately 8,499 law graduates annually, according to the Council of Australian Law Deans.²² However, a large proportion of graduates pursue non-legal careers, reflecting the broad utility of law degrees.²³

Content

Accredited law courses are required to provide the training set out in the Priestley 11. This provides students with the basic principles of law that all lawyers must be familiar with. The Priestley 11 subjects are:

- Criminal Law and Procedure
- Torts
- Contracts
- Property
- Equity
- Company Law
- Administrative Law
- Federal and State Constitutional Law
- Civil Dispute Resolution
- Evidence
- Ethics and Professional Responsibility.

Each of these subjects has an identified list of elements or guidelines as to what should be covered to make it clear what a student should learn. Statutory interpretation is an additional knowledge area and skill that must be covered in the academic stage of legal education and training.²⁴

In addition to these core subjects, law students must choose electives to make up the balance of their law degree. These differ between law schools, however, common subjects include international law, human rights, tax, family law, defamation,

²² Council of Australian Law Deans, [Data regarding law school graduate numbers and outcomes](#) (2018).

²³ Professor Sally Kift and Kana Nakano, [Reimagining the Professional Regulation of Australian Legal Education](#) (2021) at 88.

²⁴ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Statement on Statutory Interpretation](#).

competition law, employment, finance, privacy, media and technology environment and planning and intellectual property. Many law schools also offer clinical legal placements (such as in a community legal centre) as electives.

Delivery

Requirements about how accredited law courses should be delivered are set out in the LACC's [Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses](#), which are used by the state and territory admitting authorities when accrediting a law course. The Accreditation Standards cover:

- the nature of the law course
- the duration of the law course
- learning outcomes
- content of the law course
- teaching the law course
- assessing understanding and competence.

These requirements are set out at a high level and allow flexibility in the teaching methods to be used.

The Admissions Committee and the LACC are currently undertaking work on proposed revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses.²⁵ These revisions aim to update the Standards to address the emergence of online delivery and new digital technologies, as well as other matters such as intensives or block delivery.

The Committees have resolved to pause implementation of the updates to the Accreditation Standards arising from that review until recommendations from the review of PLT are finalised, to avoid law schools needing to adjust their law course delivery twice.

4.3 PLT

Purpose

PLT assists the transformation from law student to legal professional, providing structured, supervised learning that embeds core skills such as legal writing, interviewing, advocacy, negotiation, ethics and professional responsibility.

²⁵ The Standards are available at <https://legalservicescouncil.org.au/about-us/law-admissions-consultative-committee.html> and information about the consultation is available at <https://legalservicescouncil.org.au/consultations/current-consultations.html>.

This helps to assure minimum competency for admission by equipping graduates with the practical capabilities required to practise as an entry-level lawyer. It also protects consumers of legal services by ensuring that new lawyers understand professional standards, client-centred practice and the regulatory framework governing legal practice.

This competency-based emphasis distinguishes PLT from academic legal study, which focuses primarily on understanding legal principles, legal theory and doctrinal analysis.

Content

The competencies that a student is expected to develop through PLT are set out in the [PLT Competency Standards](#), which were developed by LACC and APLEC. They are broken into four categories: skills, compulsory practice areas, optional practice areas and values.

Table 1: PLT competencies

Area	Details
Skills	Lawyer's Skills Problem Solving Work Management and Business Skills Trust and Office Accounting
Compulsory practice areas	Civil Litigation Practice Commercial and Corporate Practice Property Law Practice
Optional practice areas (any two)	Administrative Law Practice Banking and Finance Criminal Law Practice Consumer Law Practice Employment and Industrial Relations Practice Family Law Practice Planning and Environmental Law Practice Wills and Estate Practice
Values	Ethics and Professional Responsibility

The PLT Competency Standards describe each of these areas and set out the elements with associated performance criteria that a graduate must meet. The elements and performance criteria are detailed, with a single competency containing between 3 to 9 elements and up to 29 performance criteria.

A law graduate develops these competencies through a combination of coursework and workplace experience.²⁶

- Coursework is that which would be required for a graduate diploma, or at least 450 hours, delivered by a PLT provider who has been accredited by the local admitting authority.
- Workplace experience is a minimum of 15 days, the purpose of which is to provide a student with an opportunity to:
 - apply, test and reflect on what has been learned during coursework, while interacting with practising lawyers, other staff, government officers and clients
 - develop an understanding of the nature of legal practice and of the student's aptitude for engaging in legal practice. Additional information on workplace experience is set out in the [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#).

It is possible for the delivery of PLT to be integrated with a law course, as set out in the [Guiding Principles for Integrating Academic and PLT Courses](#).

The PLT Competency Standards also set out how the competencies can be developed via Supervised Workplace Training rather than PLT. In some jurisdictions this is referred to as Supervised Legal Training (**SLT**) or supervised traineeships. This is a period of at least 12 months of full-time supervised work with specific training requirements aligning with the PLT Competency Standards. SLT is available under the Uniform Law and supervised traineeships are available in Queensland under the Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004. The number of students that choose to fulfil their PLT requirements in this way is relatively small. In 2024-2025, 123 SLT trainees were admitted in Victoria (of a total 2,126 admissions) and in Queensland, 34 supervised trainees were admitted out of a total of 1,338 admission applications, with the Board also considering 28 applications for registration under the supervised traineeship scheme.²⁷

Delivery

PLT can be delivered in the following ways:

- a standalone course
- integrated with a law course
- a partnership model between a law school and PLT provider.

²⁶ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers](#), cl 4.1, .

²⁷ Victorian Legal Admissions Board, [Annual Report 2024-2025](#); Queensland Legal Practitioners Admission Board, [Annual Report 2024-2025](#).

Both the PLT Competency Standards and the [Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers](#) contain information about when and how PLT is to be delivered.²⁸

Table 2: Key information about delivery of PLT

Aspect of PLT delivery	Details
When PLT may be commenced	Generally, after the applicant has completed an academic qualification in law that could lead to admission, unless the student is undertaking a program where PLT is integrated with a law course.
Duration of PLT	<p>In the case of a graduate diploma, coursework appropriate to a graduate diploma (0.5 to 1 year) and 15 days' workplace experience.</p> <p>In the case of training other than a graduate diploma, 450 hours of coursework and at least 15 days' workplace experience.</p> <p>In the case of Supervised Workplace Training, the equivalent of at least 12 months of full-time work which includes some coursework.</p>
When workplace experience can be undertaken	<p>Generally, to be undertaken concurrently with or up to two years after completing PLT coursework.</p> <p>To be completed at a minimum of two full days per week or four lots of four hours per week.</p>
Teaching method	<p>The LACC framework is agnostic as to how PLT should be delivered (e.g. in person, online, hybrid).</p> <p>In the past, there has been an expectation that providers will deliver coursework intensives at the beginning of the course in person. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the LACC encouraged admitting authorities to allow PLT providers to deliver coursework intensives (usually delivered in person) by virtual means.</p> <p>From 2026, New South Wales requires all PLT providers to deliver 15 days of coursework in person.</p>
Qualifications of instructors	<p>A person instructing or supervising an applicant while acquiring competence in any skill, practice area or value must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either have substantial current or recent experience in practising law, or • have comparable relevant qualifications or experience, and

²⁸ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers](#); Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers](#).

Aspect of PLT delivery	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comply with any other relevant legislative or regulatory requirements in the relevant jurisdiction.
Level of training	PLT must be provided at a level equivalent to post-graduate training and build on the academic knowledge, skills and values about the law, the legal system and legal practice which a graduate of a tertiary qualification in law should have acquired during that qualification.
Assessment	There is requirement for assessment to determine whether a student has acquired and demonstrated an appropriate understanding of, and competence in, each element of the skills, values and practice areas, noting that the course may provide for student to re-sit assessments.
Resilience and wellbeing	<p>All PLT providers and Supervised Workplace Training providers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make applicants aware of the importance of personal resilience in dealing with the demands of legal practice provide applicants with appropriate access to resources that will help them develop such resilience provide applicants with information about how and where to seek help in identifying mental health difficulties and in dealing with their effects make applicants aware of the benefits of developing and maintaining personal wellbeing in their professional and personal lives provide applicants with information about how and where to find resources to help them develop and maintain such wellbeing.

More detail is set out at **Appendix C**. Like law courses, PLT providers are accredited by the local admitting authorities.

In addition to the way that PLT is regulated for the purposes of admission to the legal profession, many PLT providers are subject to regulation by the Tertiary Education Quality and Safeguards Agency (**TEQSA**) under the Higher Education Standards Framework. Regulation by TEQSA allows providers to facilitate student access to government financial help schemes, such as HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP. More information about regulation by TEQSA is set out at **Appendix D**.

While the PLT Competency Standards set the minimum requirements for PLT, there is flexibility in the method of delivery of PLT and there is nothing to prevent PLT providers from delivering a PLT course that goes beyond these requirements. There is considerable diversity in the content and delivery mode for PLT providers across Australia (see case studies in the section below).

PLT providers and cost

At the time this paper was prepared, there were fourteen PLT providers operating in Australia. Two providers (Leo Cussen and The College of Law) offer PLT nationally or almost nationally. The remaining providers largely have a single state or territory focus.

Table 3: Australian PLT providers, qualifications and locations

PLT Provider	Qualification	National	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Leo Cussen	Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (GDLP)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The College of Law	GDLP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Newcastle	Juris Doctor & GDLP			✓						
	Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Diploma of Legal Practice									
University of New South Wales	Graduate Diploma of Legal Professional Practice (GDLP)			✓						
University of Technology Sydney (UTS)	Graduate Certificate in Professional Legal Practice (GCPLP).			✓						
	Juris Doctor Graduate Certificate in Professional Legal Practice (JD Accelerate)									
Queensland University of Technology	GDLP					✓				
Bond University Faculty of Law	GDLP					✓				
Flinders University* (in partnership with Leo Cussen)	Dual award – Flinders University LLB and Leo Cussen GDLP						✓			
Centre for Legal Studies	GDLP (awarded by University of Tasmania)							✓		

PLT Provider	Qualification	National	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Swinburne University of Technology (In partnership with Leo Cussen)	Dual award – Swinbourne LLB & Leo Cussen GDLP								✓	
ACAP University College	GDLP			✓					✓ (with LIV)	
Piddington Society Inc	None									✓
Curtin University	GDLP									✓
Institute of Legal Training	None									✓

At the time this paper was prepared, costs for PLT ranged from \$6,000 to \$16,531.

Factors that can affect the price of PLT courses include:

- administrative fees for the PLT provider to organise students' workplace experience placement
- students paying more if they reduce their required workplace experience by replacing workplace experience days with training modules and/or a special project
- students paying more to take additional elective subjects to replacing workplace experience days with training modules
- alumni or family member discounts.

Case Study: Centre for Legal Studies

The national survey found that there is an overall trend of graduates from Tasmania being more satisfied with the PLT experience. The Centre for Legal Studies is a local PLT provider, and there are also national providers operating in Tasmania.

The Centre for Legal Studies delivers the Tasmanian Legal Practice Course, a fully in-person on campus course over 24 weeks (in person three days a week). The Tasmanian Legal Practice Course offers:

- workshop style teaching grounded in real practice due to the course instructors and coordinators being current legal practitioners working within the Tasmanian legal profession, community and government legal sectors, or the Tasmanian Bar
- advocacy focused training through weekly court appearances in Tasmanian courts and tribunals before real Judges, Magistrates and Tribunal members

- simulated file work and transactions, working with “real life” scenarios in Course “Firms”
- a 15 day work experience placement organised by the course through its connections with the Tasmanian legal profession.

Case Study: College of Law

The College of Law operates in most states and territories around Australia. The programs are offered as:

- full time, delivered over 15 weeks with 30-35 hours of study per week
- part time, delivered over 30 weeks with 15-20 hours of study per week, or
- in Victoria and Queensland, the “Balanced” option, delivered over 18 weeks with 15-20 hours of study per week.²⁹

In New South Wales, from March 2026, The College of Law is adjusting its course delivery to comply with the new requirement for 15 days of PLT coursework to be delivered in person.

Outside New South Wales, the PLT programs each start with five days of live workshops, which are either online or on campus. The rest of the coursework (e.g. 14 weeks for a full-time program) is delivered via an online learning portal.

Workplace experience requirements can vary by jurisdiction but, for example, in South Australia, a student can choose between two options:

- 75 days of workplace experience, with no additional coursework required
- 15 days of workplace experience, with an additional six-week online program and written reflections (approximately 20 hours online study per week) and an additional fee.³⁰

4.4 Supervised legal practice

Purpose

In each state and territory, new solicitors are subject to a two-year period of supervised legal practice (or 18 months if a solicitor completed a form of Supervised Workplace

²⁹ See College of Law, [Your Course Options](#).

³⁰ See College of Law, [Workplace Experience Guide for Students](#)

Training).³¹ This means that the solicitor must be supervised by a solicitor with a practising certificate who is not subject to a supervision requirement.

This period allows new lawyers to consolidate skills, build professional judgment and gain exposure to diverse practice environments. Supervised legal practice plays a key role in developing early career lawyers. The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner has noted that:

*By setting up new lawyers for successful independent legal practice, SLP [supervised legal practice] promotes the Uniform Law’s objectives of ensuring lawyers are competent and maintain high ethical and professional standards in the provision of legal services, and enhancing the protection of clients of law practices and of the protection of the public generally.*³²

Some newly admitted lawyers may be eligible for an exemption from the supervised legal practice condition (for example, for time spent practising as a barrister or practising overseas). Under the Uniform Law, lawyers who practice as a barrister only are not required to undertake supervised legal practice.³³

Content

While subject to a condition of supervised legal practice, solicitors can undertake nearly all work, with some restrictions and subject to “reasonable” supervision. For example, in New South Wales, a solicitor who holds a practising condition subject to the condition of supervision cannot be the solicitor on the record or sign a bill of costs.³⁴

Delivery

There is limited guidance on the standard of supervision that is required during supervised legal practice. While Rule 37 of the [Australian Solicitors’ Conduct Rules](#), which form the basis of the Conduct Rules under the Uniform Law and in each jurisdiction, provides that a solicitor with designated responsibility for a matter must exercise “reasonable supervision” over solicitors engaged in the provision of the legal services for that matter, “reasonable supervision” is not defined.

³¹ Legal Profession Uniform Law, s 46; Legal Profession Act 2009 (ACT), s 50; *Legal Profession Regulation 2007* (ACT), cl 13; *Legal Profession Act 2006* (NT), s 73; *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld), s 56; *Legal Practitioners Act 1981* (SA), s 16 and *Rules of the Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council 2018* (SA), r 11; *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Tas), s 59.

³² Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, [Supervised Legal Practice](#).

³³ See for example [Legal Profession Uniform Law, s 49\(3\)](#).

³⁴ See for example [Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 2005, r 7.1\(6\)](#) and [Legal Profession Uniform Law, s 188](#).

Recently, regulators have undertaken work in relation to training and education for early career lawyers and to support supervision. The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner has developed resources to assist early career lawyers and their supervisors, including:

- Early Career Lawyer Capability Framework
- Reflective Practice Template
- Supervision Plan Template.³⁵

These sit with the early career lawyer capability framework to provide clarity on the capabilities and skills that the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner expect lawyers to develop by the end of supervised legal practice.³⁶

The Law Society of New South Wales has also developed a capability framework for solicitors that covers three levels (developing, proficient and expert) across seven identified capabilities.³⁷ While this is not specific to supervision, it may assist lawyers in understanding the steps in their proficiency development.

4.5 Continuing professional development

Purpose

Legal practitioners have ongoing continuing professional development (**CPD**) obligations to ensure that they maintain competence and keep pace with legal and technological change. This requirement is imposed as a condition on their practising certificate.

Content

CPD ensures ongoing professional growth in areas such as:

- ethics and professional responsibility
- substantive law updates
- practice management
- professional skills.

While the requirements are fairly consistent across Australia, there are some minor differences to the content of the CPD obligations between states and territories. In

³⁵ Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, [Supervised Legal Practice](#).

³⁶ Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner: [Early Career Lawyer Capability Framework](#).

³⁷ Law Society of NSW, [Capability Framework](#).

some jurisdictions, there are differences between the requirements for solicitors and barristers. More information is at **Appendix E**.

Delivery

The relevant legal profession rules set out the requirements for CPD activities, which may include attendance at seminars, research for papers in a legal publication, preparing or delivery of a presentation, or membership of a committee where the work performed is of significance to the practice of law and is reasonably likely to assist the solicitor's professional development. There can be limits to the amount of time that be claimed over the year for each activity. In Western Australia, providers of CPD need to be accredited or approved by the local regulator.

4.6 Practice management course

Purpose

In all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory and Tasmania, lawyers who wish to become a principal in a firm must complete a practice management course. This requirement is imposed as a condition on practising certificates.

Content and delivery

Practice management courses typically cover areas such as ethics, business and practice management, financial and trust accounting, risk and compliance and people leadership. The requirements for the content and delivery of these courses varies between jurisdictions. Generally, providers need to be accredited or approved by the regulator responsible for issuing practising certificates.

4.7 Specialist accreditation

Purpose

Lawyers may choose to become accredited as a specialist in their area of practice. While this is not mandatory, it improves the standard of legal practice in specialised and technical areas and entitles a legal practitioner to promote themselves as such.

Content and delivery

Areas of specialisation vary between states and territories and not each jurisdiction delivers its own specialist accreditation program.

For example, Queensland offers specialist accreditation programs in ten areas of speciality: business law, commercial litigation, criminal law, family law, immigration

law, personal injuries, property law, succession law, taxation law and workplace relations. The Queensland specialist accreditation program requires lawyers to complete 15 points of CPD annually, 10 of which need to be in the area of accreditation. Once accredited, lawyers must continue to practice in their area of specialty for at least 2.5 days per fortnight.³⁸

³⁸ Queensland Law Society, [Specialist Accreditation](#).

5. The legal profession's experience of PLT

5.1 Background

To inform the review of PLT, the Legal Services Council engaged Urbis, an independent research agency, to undertake a national survey of legal practitioners. The survey was distributed to graduates and supervisors in all Australian jurisdictions (except New South Wales, where a local survey had already been undertaken).

The survey was intended to identify how people have experienced PLT and what competencies should be delivered as part of PLT, as well as earlier in law courses and in supervised legal practice. The survey also explored some of the recommendations for further work that arose from the NSW LPAB PLT survey, including asking graduates about their overall satisfaction with PLT, whether they were paid to undertake their workplace and experience and, if not, how that affected their financial situation and asking supervisors when they consider it is important that specific skills are taught (if at all).

The Committees are grateful to the regulators and professional bodies that assisted with distributing the survey.

After data cleaning and quality checks, the final sample included 1,463 graduate responses and 948 supervisor responses, with 173 respondents completing both surveys.

The data was analysed using established quantitative methods, including cross-tabulation, significance testing and correlation analysis, complemented by thematic analysis of open-ended responses.

While the overall sample is not proportionately representative for all jurisdictions, with certain jurisdictions over- or under-represented, Urbis was satisfied that the sample sizes and margins of error are considered acceptable for the purposes of identifying broad patterns, differences between groups and areas of concern.

The report on the survey is available on the Legal Services Council's website.

5.2 Graduate responses

Over half of the graduate respondents to the survey reported being dissatisfied with their overall experience of PLT. The greatest single area of dissatisfaction was the value for money of PLT.

Around two-thirds of graduates disagreed that PLT was useful in supporting the legal profession to appropriately train early career lawyers, or that it prepared them for the start of their mandatory supervision period.

Almost half of graduates were dissatisfied with the structure and content of PLT coursework, raising concerns that coursework is repetitive of university studies, lacking academic rigour and offering limited practical value. Graduates were generally more satisfied with the teaching of compulsory subjects covered during PLT than the overall coursework structure or content.

Graduates who completed coursework primarily in-person reported substantially higher satisfaction across almost all measures than those who completed coursework online or in hybrid formats.

Workplace experience was the most positively regarded component of PLT. Graduates reported generally high satisfaction with the supervision and tasks they were assigned. A very large proportion of graduates had previous legal sector experience, with almost three-quarters of respondents reporting having worked as a paralegal or similar prior to commencing PLT studies. Those graduates with previous legal experience were generally satisfied with the usefulness of PLT workplace experience compared with their previous experience. Some respondents suggested that workplace experience could be included earlier within university studies to expose students to the practical realities of the profession, while others recommended a return to an articled clerkship to support on the job learning.

Graduates were asked about how important specific legal skills and values were when they commenced in practice. Almost all of the skills were identified as important, particularly plain English communication and ethical obligations. Both graduates and supervisors identified most of the skills and values as appropriate to be taught across all stages of legal training. Additional areas suggested for inclusion were in relation to legal technology and working with AI.

Respondents who completed their PLT within Tasmania reported a markedly more positive experience of PLT across almost all measures. Urbis has suggested that higher satisfaction amongst Tasmanian graduates suggests the model of applied learning utilised may be an effective approach to supporting the development of practical legal skills for early career lawyers.

5.3 Supervisor responses

Supervisors expressed mixed but generally negative views. Fewer than half were satisfied with the skills of early career lawyers at the start of supervision. While

supervisors were somewhat more positive than graduates about the role of PLT, almost half disagreed that PLT was useful in bridging the gap between academic study and legal practice. Two-thirds of supervisors agreed that there was a need for curriculum-based training for early career lawyers.

Supervisors reported that many of the identified skills and values were not consistently demonstrated by early career lawyers at the start of supervised legal practice. Skills such as drafting, negotiation, client advice, file management and business practice were frequently reported as being demonstrated rarely or only sometimes.

5.4 Implications

Implications of the findings of this research identified by Urbis in their survey report include the following:

- refocus PLT towards more applied learning
- clarify what PLT can and cannot realistically achieve
- prioritise interactive teaching for core skills and, where possible, in-person delivery
- make equity a guiding principle in the design of any reform of PLT
- shift from “one-size-fits-all” to a modular and differentiated model of training
- increase emphasis on high-quality, structured workplace experience
- rebalance the focus on different skills and values taught within PLT
- future-proof the curriculum.

6. Proposals for reform

6.1 Overview

The successful delivery of PLT in preparing lawyers for supervised practice is essential for the effective operation of the justice system and to protect consumers.

Both the national survey results and the NSW LPAB review have shown that the current model of PLT is no longer fit for purpose. Less than half of the supervisor respondents to the national survey reported being satisfied with the skills of early career lawyers and graduate respondents generally felt that PLT was not useful in preparing them to commence their legal career. Feedback suggests that the cost and length of time taken to complete PLT create a barrier to entry to the profession. The current requirements for PLT also include mandatory content in practice areas which are not relevant for many practitioners and do not include emerging areas of practice.

Concerns have also been raised about the delivery of PLT. The national survey showed a higher level of satisfaction reported by graduates who completed their PLT in person compared with those who had a hybrid model or undertook the course fully online. Legal practitioners have expressed the view that training is most effective while working in the profession and that this is where most practical learning occurs.

The Committees note that the work undertaken by the NSW LPAB to review PLT has identified recommendations for reform to address these issues. This paper is an opportunity to seek national feedback on the proposals developed in New South Wales, as well as some additional proposals.

The proposals for reform address the spectrum of legal education from law courses through to supervised legal practice. They are based on the articulation of a shorter set of practical knowledge and skills that are required for a person to be ready to be admitted to practice (set out at **Appendix F**) and recognise that those skills can start to be developed as part of a law course. Additional training would be undertaken after admission, when a lawyer is working under supervision. Redesigning PLT in this way allows skills to be developed over a longer period of time and become embedded from the start of legal training and recognises the need for training in the early years of practice.

The consultation proposals would introduce the following system:

- law courses will teach and assess identified practical knowledge and skills throughout a law degree

- a short PLT program will teach identified practical knowledge and skills, delivered in-person and with rigorous assessment
- students will undertake 15 days of workplace experience prior to admission
- post-admission legal training (**PALT**) will be undertaken in the first two years of practice and delivered in-person with assessment
- the supervision framework for all early career lawyers will be considered and improved.

The Committees also seek your views on potential reforms regarding clinical legal education and its capacity to further develop skills for new lawyers.

The proposals identify where changes would be needed to the current national framework for pre-admission legal education and training, maintained by the LACC. These include the PLT Competency Standards and the Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers (referred to collectively as the **PLT Standards**), as well as the Standards for PLT Workplace Experience.

If these proposals are implemented, it would also be necessary for corresponding amendments to be made to the Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules 2015 and the relevant legislation or rules in other states and territories to maintain national consistency.

Some proposals, particularly those regarding training and other requirements after admission, would require reform to be pursued by other bodies, and primarily at a state and territory level. Recommendations developed by the Committees in relation to post-admission requirements will need to be referred to the responsible bodies for consideration.

6.2 Incorporating practical skills in law courses

The Priestley 11 subjects address areas of knowledge and do not include practical skills. The Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses do not currently include requirements around practical skills delivery as part of a law course. The extent to which law schools emphasise practical skills in their law courses differs.

The national survey results showed that graduates and supervisors both considered that a number of legal skills should be developed throughout the continuum of legal education from law courses to supervised legal practice. Similarly, the NSW LPAB review has identified an opportunity to introduce practical skill development earlier by incorporating more skills-based content and assessment into law courses.

The proposal is that the skills should be introduced to students in law degrees before being developed and re-enforced in the pre-admission PLT course. To do this in a coordinated way, law courses and PLT need to be working to an identified set of skills that students must obtain. The NSW LPAB has identified the practical knowledge and skills expected of a person seeking admission, to be covered in a law course and during PLT. The proposed skills schedule is at **Appendix F**. If adopted, this would replace the skills, values and practice areas set out in the PLT Competency Standards. The impacts of this proposed schedule are considered in more detail in section 6.3 below. The skills schedule may be adapted to reflect feedback received to this consultation.

The third column of **Appendix F** identifies the skills which could be taught and assessed within a law course. A small number of skills would not need to be included in the revised PLT course, as it is more appropriate for them to be delivered as part of a law course. These include oral presentations, legal research and an understanding the nature of the legal profession.

The requirement to incorporate practical knowledge and skills, with assessment, in a law course could be imposed as part of the accreditation and re-accreditation of law courses. This would require the LACC to amend the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses.

Alternatively, the new requirements could also be imposed by amending the Priestley 11. As the Priestley 11 are currently described as areas of knowledge, the skills identified in the skills schedule may not fit neatly with that document. That approach may also be too prescriptive for universities and would not easily accommodate the areas in the skills schedule where it is noted that the skills could be addressed in any of the Priestley 11 subjects.

The Committees acknowledge that a large proportion of law students do not go on to enter legal practice.³⁹ Law degrees are often seen as good generalist degree that can be attractive to a range of future employers. For those students, the additional practical focus may not be needed. However, it remains the case that legal education must be capable of preparing all students to seek admission and enter practice.

It is proposed that these changes to law courses should be in effect at the start of the 2028 academic year.

³⁹ Professor Sally Kift and Kana Nakano, [Reimagining the Professional Regulation of Australian Legal Education](#) (2021) at 88.

Proposal 1

The LACC amends the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses to require law courses to demonstrate how they have included practical teaching and training of the practical skills identified in **Appendix F**, with rigorous assessment.

Consultation questions – Incorporating practical skills in law courses

1.1 Do you support the proposal for the LACC to amend the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses to require law courses to demonstrate how they have included practical teaching and training of the practical skills identified at **Appendix F**, with appropriate assessment?

1.2 Do you suggest any amendments to the proposed skills schedule (**Appendix F**) in respect of the knowledge areas and skills to be included in the delivery of law courses, as identified in column three of the table?

1.3 Would law schools be able to implement these changes by the beginning of the 2028 academic year, as proposed?

6.3 Reform of PLT

Redefining practical knowledge and skills

As noted above, there has been recognition that the requirements for PLT need to be reconsidered. Responses to the national survey have recognised the need for most legal skills to be taught throughout the law course, PLT and supervised legal practice – reducing the need for detailed focus in PLT.

The PLT Competency Standards currently contain some 146 separate performance criteria for the competencies that all law graduates must study, not including the optional practice areas. The PLT Competency Standards contemplate that entry-level lawyers would be able to demonstrate these skills at the point of admission. Feedback to the national survey from supervisors suggests that lawyers are failing to meet those expectations, with fewer than half of supervisor respondents indicating that they were satisfied with the skills of early career lawyers at the start of supervision.

There are concerns that the current Standards set students up with an almost impossible task. The requirements are too long and detailed and the inclusion of specific practice areas requires students to undertake practical exercises in areas of law which they may never intend to practise. This ‘information overload’ increases both the length and cost of PLT delivery, without clear benefit. This creates unrealistic expectations on students and ignores the reality that practical skills in specialised areas can best be learnt over time in practice, under appropriate supervision. There is a

strong argument for a renewed focus on the core skills required of all lawyers at the time of admission, with subject matter expertise to be developed on the job.

These considerations have driven the development of a proposal for a shorter schedule of practical knowledge and skills that lawyers should be able to demonstrate at the point of admission. These should be skills that are applicable across a range of practice areas which can be developed and applied as needed.

The Committees note the work that the NSW LPAB has done to develop a skills schedule in collaboration with the New South Wales legal profession, which is set out at **Appendix F**. The Committees are of the view that the skills that were identified and considered as part of the national PLT survey would fall within the skills schedule developed by New South Wales. These skills also address the feedback from supervisors to the national survey that skills such as drafting, negotiation, client advice, file management and business practice are demonstrated rarely or only sometimes.

The skills schedule sets out the areas of practical knowledge and skills at a high level. The Committees are mindful of the need to strike an appropriate balance between sufficiently outlining the skills that are required at the time of admission and avoiding the creation of an overly detailed list, such as the current PLT Competency Standards.

The following table provides a summary of the skills schedule with consideration of how additional knowledge and skills might be incorporated.

Table 3: Overview of proposed skills schedule

Skills Category	Summary of practical knowledge and skills as per Appendix F	Comments
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take instructions • Provide advice • Interview and prepare witness statement or affidavit • Professional communication • Short oral presentation • Communication in a range of forms, with regard to the nature of the audience 	
Client relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to service the needs of clients taking their characteristics and circumstances into account • Understand role as officer of the court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These might cover skills such as working with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with colleagues within a team 	

Skills Category	Summary of practical knowledge and skills as per Appendix F	Comments
Record-keeping and matter management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and maintain files Create records Keep client updated on matters Manage time and prioritise task, ensuring costs are reasonable and proportionate 	
Court processes, etiquette and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appear as solicitor advocate in short, simple court application Understand court processes and etiquette Understand communication with judicial officer 	
Negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in settlements negotiations of simple commercial dispute Participate in negotiation of terms of a simple contract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The areas in which negotiation skills would be developed are limited. Early career lawyers may develop negotiation skills in other contexts, such as employment law, post-admission if relevant to their practice. The skills schedule has limited reference to alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and strategy. It does not encourage consideration of when ADR is appropriate, or which types of ADR are appropriate in a particular matter. It may be that those skills can be developed on the job, within a particular practice area.
Drafting legal documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a simple contract Draft a simple Summons or Statement of Claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may be that additional drafting skills can be developed after admission as needed (e.g. foundational pleadings, preparing an advocacy case file, producing written advocacy material and preparing interlocutory application packs).
Legal Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate legislative references, Parliamentary materials and case law Locate leading authorities on a particular issue 	
Ethics, Professional Responsibility and life as a lawyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the nature, duties and responsibilities of the legal profession Identify and address a possible conflict of interest Prepare a short written advice on a simple fact scenario raising an ethical issue Understand appropriate methods of charging and billing for legal work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While admitted lawyers will not be expected to manage monies held on trusts, it remains important for lawyers to understand the basic principles of trust money as they may be exposed to this in their early years of practice. This list does not include awareness of anti-money laundering/counter-terrorism financing legislation, which is an emerging area of importance to the profession. However, this area may be

Skills Category	Summary of practical knowledge and skills as per Appendix F	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge of the principles of holding money on trust • Knowledge the mental health and substance abuse issues that disproportionately impact the legal profession • Exposure to techniques to build resilience, flexibility, an ability to deal with uncertainty, to adapt to change and to cope with stress • Know the nature of claims made against lawyers and of methods to manage risk • Understand the importance of continuous learning, improvement, curiosity, flexibility, humility, ability to respond constructively to feedback, being self-critical and having a willingness to ask for help. 	<p>sufficiently covered by the other requirements in this category (e.g. understanding the duties and responsibilities of the profession), which are drafted broadly enough to capture new regulatory areas as they arise.</p>
Responsible use of technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand appropriate use, and limits, of AI and other technologies to serve the client's best interests, including the need to maintain confidentiality and security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible use of technology was not explicitly included in the list of skills in the national survey. Survey responses suggested that the use of legal technology and appropriate utilisation of AI were important within modern legal practice. While it is possible this area would be covered by other parts of the skills schedule, given its significance it is proposed that it be set out as a separate category.

Proposal 2

The LACC amends the PLT Competency Standards to reflect the categories and skills set out in the skills schedule at **Appendix F** as the practical knowledge and skills required at the time of admission.

The PLT Competency Standards also set out how the competencies that are to be developed during PLT can be developed via Supervised Workplace Training, which is available in Victoria and Queensland.

Supervised Workplace Training is a period of at least 12 months of full-time supervised work in an approved legal practice, including or similar to articles or clerkship, which is usually initiated by an application to the admitting authority. There are restrictions on who can supervise someone undertaking Supervised Workplace Training. Supervisors

must have an appropriate level of experience (3 to 5 years' experience depending on the jurisdiction) and only supervise one trainee (or in Queensland, two) at a time. Each trainee must have a training plan and keep a training diary.

There is also a requirement for 90 hours of coursework (referred to as approved programmed training in Queensland) to be delivered to those undertaking Supervised Workplace Training. The Victorian Legal Admissions Board requires the following topics to be completed through an approved provider or another provider approved by the Board:

- Ethics and Professional Responsibility
- Lawyer's Skills
- The Risk Management element of Work Management and Business Skills.⁴⁰

In Queensland, the 90 hours of approved programmed training must include ethics.⁴¹

Lawyers who undertake Supervised Workplace Training are still expected to develop all the competencies set out in the PLT Competency Standards.

The Committees welcome views on whether Supervised Workplace Training should continue to be available and, if so, what parts of the skills schedule should be delivered by a PLT provider.

Consultation questions – practical knowledge and skills

2.1 Do you support the proposal to amend the PLT Competency Standards to reflect the categories and skills set out in the skills schedule at **Appendix F** as the practical knowledge and skills required at the time of admission?

2.2 Do you suggest any amendments to the categories or skills set out in the skills schedule at **Appendix F**?

2.3 Do you think that the following areas need to be specifically included in the skills schedule, either as categories or identified knowledge and skills:

- i. Working with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?
- ii. Preventing and addressing sexual harassment?

⁴⁰ Victorian Legal Admissions Board [I have an Australian law degree](#) and [Guide for Supervised Legal Training](#).

⁴¹ [Supreme Court \(Admission\) Rules 2004 \(Qld\)](#), Rule 90.

Consultation questions – practical knowledge and skills

- iii. Awareness of obligations under anti-money laundering/counter-terrorism financing regulations?
- iv. Awareness of ADR options, or specific skills relating to ADR?
- v. Negotiation skills in a wider range of settings, or other specific settings?
- vi. Drafting any other types of legal documents? If so, what types of documents?

2.4 Should the option for graduates to undertake Supervised Workplace Training as a way of completing PLT be retained?

2.5 If the option of Supervised Workplace Training is to be retained, what aspects of the skills schedule should be delivered by an approved provider or as approved programmed training?

2.6 Should there be any other amendments to Supervised Workplace Training?

A corollary to reducing the scope of PLT in this way is that the ‘practice area’ specific training would be delivered after admission, while lawyers are working under supervision. More detail on that proposal is included below (section 6.5).

Delivery of PLT

Duration

Currently, PLT coursework taught as part of a graduate diploma must be delivered at the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 8 Standard (typically 0.5 to 1 year), or in the case of training other than a graduate diploma, 450 hours of coursework. However, this length of time corresponds to the content of PLT, which includes core skills plus five practice areas.

As noted above, the length of the course and associated cost can operate as a barrier to entry to the legal profession. Almost half the of the graduate respondents to the national survey expressed the view that there should be less time spent on PLT coursework.

If the knowledge and skills needed at the time of admission is updated to reflect the proposed skills schedule (**Appendix F**), it may be possible for PLT to be delivered as a shorter course over a period of several weeks. This would address the national survey findings that almost half of graduate respondents reported that there should be less time spent on coursework. A shorter PLT course may also drive down the upfront cost of PLT and have financial advantages for students.

In line with NSW LPAB's recommendation, it is proposed that the initial length of a PLT course be a minimum of four weeks, with an additional week of preparatory work and pre-reading. The week of preparatory work would not involve in person teaching, but knowledge of that content would be assessable in the four-week program. Students would have to certify that they have read or viewed the materials.

The length of the course can be evaluated once the reforms to both law courses and PLT have been in place for a period of at least two years and practical skills and assessment have been incorporated in law courses. It may be that once delivery of practical skills and assessment have been embedded into law courses, the duration of PLT coursework can be reduced to a period of two to three weeks.

Proposal 3

The LACC amends the PLT Standards to reduce PLT courses to a minimum four weeks in length, plus up to one week of pre-reading and viewing of preparatory materials.

To facilitate these amendments, the requirement for PLT to be delivered as a graduate diploma or equivalent could be removed. Providers could still provide the required training as part of a longer graduate diploma or other qualification if they wish, but it would not be required.

A disadvantage of this change is that students will not be eligible for FEE-HELP if the PLT program does not fulfill the AQF qualifications. The PLT course will also not be subject to TEQSA oversight and the equivalent role will need to be performed by the relevant PLT accrediting body to ensure standards are maintained. The Committees welcome your feedback on whether additional quality assurance measures need to be included in the PLT Standards if this change is progressed. The Committees also note that this will not be a change for all providers as TEQSA accreditation is not a condition of the PLT Standards and not all providers are currently accredited.

The Committees are also aware that some currently offered PLT courses are popular and may wish to continue in operation. For example, the national survey showed that the PLT course delivered by the Centre for Legal Studies in Tasmania has very high overall satisfaction. That program currently offers more than the minimum requirements set out in the PLT Competency Standards. The proposed changes to the PLT requirements and framework would not prohibit courses such as this offering more than the minimum requirements to students. There may also be demand from some students to obtain a formal qualification when undertaking their PLT, in which case

those providers who offer graduate diplomas or similar could choose to be accredited by TEQSA.

Students who undertake longer PLT courses would still be required to undertake the proposed post-admission training to embed training while in practice, which could be delivered by PLT providers or others (as set out below).

Proposal 4

The LACC amends the PLT Standards to provide that a PLT course may be, but does not have to be, delivered at a graduate diploma level or equivalent.

In-person delivery

The national survey found graduates who completed their PLT in person reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction. This suggests that an in-person learning environment helps to facilitate student learning and participation. In-person learning may help engagement and build connections and networks within the legal profession. Some teaching methods and assessments (e.g. advocacy, moots) may also be most effectively delivered in person.

It is therefore proposed that PLT coursework be required to be delivered in person (unless the provider grants an exemption to a student, to be considered on a case-by-case basis). This is consistent with the proposal from the NSW LPAB.⁴²

A requirement for PLT to be delivered entirely in person may raise issues for those who are based in rural, regional or remote areas, as well as those who live with disability or have caring responsibilities. Any change which inadvertently reduces access to PLT or reduces diversity in lawyers is not desirable. It is proposed that PLT providers consider applications from affected students on a case-by-case basis. The Committees note that there may be a need for synchronous online delivery in exceptional circumstances to facilitate this.

Proposal 5

The LACC amends the PLT Standards to require that PLT coursework be delivered in person or, in exceptional cases (as determined by the PLT provider), by synchronous online learning.

⁴² Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Discussion Paper on PLT Reform](#) (30 September 2025) at 102.

Assessment

Feedback from the national survey and through the NSW LPAB process indicates that the current approach to assessment in PLT is not achieving the desired results. It has been suggested that the ability to re-submit assessments several times reduces the rigour and level of effort applied to studies as it provides students with insufficient incentive to prepare for assessments. The national survey also found that assessments were commonly characterised as template-based or “box-ticking” exercises which were “hard to fail” and did not reflect the realities of legal practice.

Clause 1.7 of the LACC’s Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers deals with assessment, including the need for assessment, for the assessment methods to align with the objectives of the course and to reflect the actual requirements of legal practice in the relevant area.

It is proposed that PLT should include a qualitative assessment scheme that is rigorous and effective in measuring whether students have developed the required knowledge and skills.

Proposal 6

The LACC reviews the PLT Standards to ensure that assessments are rigorous in measuring whether students have developed the required knowledge and skills.

The Committees are also aware that there are currently some inconsistencies with how PLT providers are reporting instances of academic misconduct in the student conduct reports that are provided to admitting authorities. This can make it difficult for admitting authorities to understand the severity of a misconduct incident when a graduate applies for admission.

The Committees welcome feedback on whether the PLT Standards should provide more guidance on what is expected from PLT providers when recording and reporting on academic misconduct to the admitting authorities in the student conduct reports.

Consultation questions – Delivery of PLT

3.1 Do you support the proposal for the LACC to amend the PLT Standards to reduce PLT courses to a minimum of four weeks in length, together with up to one week of pre-reading and viewing of preparatory materials?

Consultation questions – Delivery of PLT

3.2 Do you think that a four-week period is too short or too long for a PLT course, taking into account the other proposals in relation to law courses and post-admission training?

4.1 Do you support the proposal for the LACC to amend the PLT Standards to provide that a PLT course may be, but does not have to be, delivered at a graduate diploma level or equivalent?

4.2 If you support this proposal, would any additional safeguards be required for PLT providers (given they would not necessarily be regulated by TEQSA)? For example, should new quality assurance measures be required in the LACC framework documents? What should those additional measures be?

5.1 Do you support the proposal that the LACC amends the PLT Standards to require that PLT coursework is to be delivered in person or, in exceptional cases (as determined by the PLT provider), by synchronous online delivery?

6.1 Do you support a review of the PLT Standards to ensure that assessments are rigorous in measuring whether students have developed the required knowledge and skills? If so, do you have any suggestions on how the Standards should be set to ensure rigorous and effective assessment?

6.2 Do you think that there is a need for the LACC to amend the PLT Standards to provide guidance on how incidents of academic misconduct should be recorded and reported to the admitting authorities in student conduct reports?

6.4 Workplace experience

The purpose of workplace experience is for students to:

- apply, test and reflect on what has been learned during PLT, while interacting with practising lawyers, other staff, government officers and clients
- develop an understanding of the nature of legal practice and of the student's aptitude for engaging in legal practice.⁴³

In responses to the national survey, workplace experience was the most positively regarded component of PLT. Supervisors generally agreed that workplace experience is important in supporting skill development. Generally, graduates felt that the amount of

⁴³ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#), cl 4.

time allocated to workplace experience in PLT was appropriate. However, these results varied by provider, time spent doing workplace experience and whether the graduate had previous work experience.

The maintenance of a workplace experience requirement ensures that all early career lawyers have some practical experience prior to admission. The Committees consider that the existing minimum requirement of 15 days does not impose an oppressive burden on students, or on the legal profession in providing supervision.

It is proposed that the minimum requirement of 15 days' workplace experience be retained and that there be no prohibition on graduates undertaking additional workplace experience hours. The NSW LPAB has noted that it may be important for there to be an option to undertake more than 15 days, including where workplace experience is undertaken at community legal centres, as part of an elective placement unit or where students identify the need to gain extra experience.

Proposal 7

The LACC retains the requirement for a minimum of 15 days of workplace experience prior to admission.

Nature of workplace experience and supervision

Findings from the national survey showed that graduates undertook a diversity of tasks as part of their workplace experience and that those tasks appeared to align with the tasks identified in the Standards for PLT Workplace Experience.⁴⁴ Student satisfaction with workplace experience is influenced by the variety of tasks that they have exposure to. Survey results showed that there was some variation in the tasks undertaken depending on whether students were undertaking their workplace experience in private practice, in-house, government or community legal centres.

The NSW LPAB has suggested that greater structure is required for work experience placements to ensure consistency and that those undertaking it obtain valuable experience. This includes specifying tasks that should be undertaken and alignment with the skills schedule. Similarly, workplace experience should be documented and recorded, along with the nature of supervision that is required.

A small proportion of supervisor respondents to the national survey expressed concern about the lack of clear guidance or structure for supervising workplace experience.

⁴⁴ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#), cl 8.

Those supervisors reported receiving little information about expected learning outcomes, competencies or minimum standards for workplace experience. As the national survey report noted, this can create uncertainty about what graduates should be exposed to and discomfort when being asked to certify competence without clear benchmarks. The absence of supervisor support may also contribute to inconsistent quality across placements.

The Standards on PLT Workplace Experience already require the PLT provider to brief host organisations and supervisors about the purpose of workplace experience and the PLT provider's expectations about the nature of the work that the student will experience.

To address these concerns, it is proposed that the LACC updates the Standards on PLT Workplace Experience to include more information on the types of tasks and hours allocated to the development of specific skills for students completing their workplace experience, with regard to the skills schedule at **Appendix F**. This will ensure that a clear line can be drawn between the work done during workplace experience and the skills that are expected to be developed prior to admission.

Proposal 8

The LACC updates the Standards on PLT Workplace Experience to provide more information on the types of tasks and hours allocated to the development of specific skills for students completing their workplace experience, with reference to the skills schedule at **Appendix F**.

Additionally, the LACC could work with stakeholders to develop guidance for supervisors on the supervision of workplace experience that addresses the purpose and requirements of workplace experience, the type of tasks to be undertaken and time allocated to them and the ethical standards and expectation of supervisors.

Proposal 9

The LACC works with stakeholders to prepare guidance for supervisors on the supervision of workplace experience that addresses the purpose and requirements of workplace experience, the type of tasks to be undertaken and time allocated to them and the ethical standards and expectation of supervisors.

There may also be a role for legal profession regulators to assist lawyers in developing their supervisory skills and expertise. There are currently no specific training or other requirements that supervisors must undertake before they can supervise graduates

undertaking workplace experience, or supervise early career lawyers in their period of supervised legal practice. There also does not appear to be structured training on this available to lawyers generally. While lawyers working in large firms may have access to in-house training and resources on supervising students undertaking workplace experience, lawyers at medium or small firms are unlikely to have access to such support.

The Committees consider that it would be appropriate for the legal profession regulators to review the training that is offered to lawyers who wish to improve their supervisory skills. This training does not necessarily need to be limited to workplace experience and also could help all those who supervise early career lawyers.

Proposal 10

Legal profession regulators review the training that is offered to lawyers who wish to improve their supervisory skills.

When workplace experience is undertaken

Under the current Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, students are required to undertake the workplace experience minimum requirement of 15 days concurrently with or after completing the PLT coursework.⁴⁵ This means that students cannot count workplace experience undertaken prior to commencing PLT towards the minimum requirement. This appears to be because it is intended that students use their PLT workplace experience to apply, test and reflect on what has been learnt during PLT coursework. It also corresponds to the existing requirement that PLT providers instruct students on how to make the most of available supervision during their work experience and brief host organisations and supervisors about the expectations regarding supervision required.⁴⁶

The national survey showed that a large proportion of graduate respondents had worked in legal or other professional services prior to PLT. Those graduates with previous legal experience were generally satisfied with the usefulness of PLT workplace experience compared to their previous experience. Additionally, a small number of supervisors suggested that workplace experience should be included throughout legal training rather than only at the end.

⁴⁵ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#), cl 7(3)(b)

⁴⁶ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#), cl 6

Feedback from graduate responses to the national survey suggested that workplace experience could be included within university studies to expose students to the practical realities of the profession. The NSW LPAB has also proposed amendments to recognise the workplace experience that some students gain while studying a law degree (i.e. prior to PLT) where offered or permitted by a law school.⁴⁷

Allowing students to undertake their workplace experience while studying a law course ensures that students who have already gained that experience are not required to do so again just to meet the PLT requirements. It would also reduce cost and time required for students to undertake PLT, particularly where PLT workplace experience is unpaid. If this proposal is implemented along with the proposal for law courses to incorporate more practical skills in teaching and assessment, it will provide students with an opportunity to start developing skills in a practical environment from an earlier stage, under supervision.

Not all work experience undertaken by students prior to undertaking PLT will be appropriate to constitute the workplace experience component. The Standards for PLT Workplace Experience prevent a PLT provider from approving workplace experience for a student unless it is satisfied that the work includes most or all of the following tasks: significant interaction with external or in-house clients, drafting documents, legal research and using a file management system.⁴⁸ For example, prior workplace experience performing purely administrative work as a paralegal (such as preparing document bundles or assisting in high volume discovery tasks) is not likely to satisfy these requirements.

If workplace experience were to be undertaken prior to PLT, the student could discuss this with the law school at the time the workplace experience is undertaken. A question arises whether PLT providers should still play a role in certifying, after the event, that appropriate work experience has been undertaken by the student. The student would need to produce some evidence (such as a journal or log) of what work experience they had done, when and encompassing what tasks.

Proposal 11

The LACC amends the PLT Standards and the Standards for PLT Workplace Experience to allow workplace experience to be undertaken while the student is

⁴⁷ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Discussion Paper on PLT Reform](#) (30 September 2025) at 8, 102.

⁴⁸ Law Admissions Consultative Committee, [Standards for PLT Workplace Experience](#), cl 8

studying a law course, with PLT providers still playing a role in certifying after the event that appropriate workplace experience has been undertaken.

Sourcing workplace experience

The national survey showed that graduates with no existing relationship with an employer or connections in the legal sector reported difficulty in identifying workplace experience opportunities. There are currently no requirements for PLT providers to assist students with sourcing workplace experience, although some PLT providers already do this. It may be helpful for the PLT Standards to set out what PLT providers are expected to do in helping students find workplace experience opportunities.

It is proposed that the LACC amends the PLT Standards to set out the obligations of PLT providers to assist students in sourcing workplace experience placements.

Proposal 12

The LACC amends the PLT Standards to set out the obligations of PLT providers to assist students in sourcing workplace experience opportunities.

Consultation questions – Workplace experience

7.1 Do you support the LACC retaining the requirement for a minimum of 15 days of workplace experience prior to admission?

8.1 Do you support the LACC updating the Standards on PLT Workplace Experience to provide more information on the types of tasks and hours allocated to the development of specific skills for students completing their workplace experience, with regard to the skills schedule at **Appendix F**? Do you have any suggestions on what this guidance should include?

9.1 Do you support the LACC working with stakeholders to prepare guidance for supervisors on the supervision of workplace experience that addresses the purpose and requirements of workplace experience, the type of tasks to be undertaken and time allocated to them and the ethical standards and expectation of supervisors?

10.1 Do you think that legal profession regulators should review the training that is offered to lawyers who wish to improve their supervisory skills?

Consultation questions – Workplace experience

10.2 Do you think that there is a need for additional training for lawyers who wish to improve their supervisory skills? What do you think that training should include? How could it be delivered?

11.1 Do you support the LACC amending the Standards and the Standards for PLT Workplace Experience to allow a PLT provider to approve workplace experience being undertaken while the student is studying a law course? If so, should any additional safeguards or requirements be imposed on such work experience? Should PLT providers play the role of certifying that appropriate work experience has been undertaken?

12.1 Do you support the LACC amending the PLT Standards to set out the obligations of PLT providers to assist students in sourcing workplace experience opportunities?

6.5 Post-admission legal training (PALT)

Currently, in addition to general legal skills and values as part of PLT, graduates are required to undertake training in five practice areas (three mandatory and two electives). As the PLT Standards only mandate the amount of coursework that PLT must deliver in total, the number of hours dedicated to delivering each practice area varies between PLT providers and practice areas. The variation in the hours allocated to each practice area is reflective of different program designs, including where the time for training in practice areas may include skills/values/ethics as part of practical training in those practice areas.

Information provided to the Committees by five PLT providers shows that the hours for each of the three mandatory practice areas can vary from 40 hours to 150 hours, with hours for each optional practice area ranging from 33 hours to 75 hours. For those providers, the total time for all five practice areas ranges from 232 hours to 405 hours.

The proposals set out at section 6.3 to redesign PLT would see all practice areas removed from PLT.

To ensure that early career lawyers still receive sufficient training in areas relevant to their specific areas of legal work, it is proposed that they undertake additional training in their early years of practice once they are working and can apply that training on the job. The findings of the national survey support this approach, with over two thirds of supervisors supporting the need for curriculum-based training for early career lawyers.

Such training would be a new area of training called post-admission legal training (**PALT**). The benefits of PALT include:

- early career lawyers can choose to undertake training in areas that they know will be relevant to their area of practice and interests. Training areas may even be chosen by early career lawyers with their supervisor. Early career lawyers will have the opportunity to develop specialised skills which specifically relate to their discipline or area of practice.
- early career lawyers will learn practical skills while working and having the opportunity to apply new skills on the job, which can help to improve learning and retention.
- some training will be undertaken after admission while working, with associated tax deductions.

It is proposed that new lawyers would be required to undertake 15 hours of PALT each year over their first two years of practice. This would involve completing two specialist 7.5 hours courses in each of the two years, each of which would be preceded by pre-reading. While each 7.5-hour course might ideally be undertaken on one day, that would not be compulsory (e.g. it could be split into two or three evening sessions). This training would focus on developing skills that are essential to the work that the lawyer is employed to do, undertaken while they are working and can apply the skills immediately. The total of 30 hours of PALT over two years would be substantially less time than the time allocated to practice area training in PLT.

Consideration needs to be given to how the requirement to undertake PALT can be imposed. The NSW LPAB has suggested imposing a discretionary condition on practising certificates to require PALT to be undertaken within the first two years of practice. Evidence would then need to be provided to the regulator that the training has been completed for this condition to be removed. This timing would correspond with the time when new lawyers are subject to a requirement to engage in supervised legal practice (usually for two years).⁴⁹

Alternatively, PALT could be the subject of a new category of CPD for early career lawyers in their first two years of practice. However, PALT would be more prescriptive than CPD, focused on practical knowledge and skills, requiring a more specific and detailed curriculum, and a requirement to pass assessment. Additionally, activities that are identified as appropriate for the purposes of CPD may be inappropriate for PALT (e.g. preparing and presenting material at a seminar or similar, participating in a committee). Furthermore, the NSW LPAB has noted that criticisms have been made by members of the profession of the adequacy of (self-certified) CPD programs. These

⁴⁹ See, for example, s 49(1) of the Legal Profession Uniform Law.

matters suggest that it is preferable to treat PALT as its own thing, and not merely as a category of CPD. The existing CPD arrangements would remain unchanged, including for newly admitted lawyers.

Proposal 13

A new requirement should be imposed as a condition on practising certificates for early career lawyers to undertake 15 hours of PALT in each of their first two years of practice.

While it is rare that a person will obtain a practising certificate as a barrister without having practised for two years as a solicitor first (and receiving an unrestricted practising certificate), it is possible to do so.

In New South Wales and many other jurisdictions, candidates for the Bar are required to complete the local Bar Association's requirements to obtain a practising certificate as a barrister. Therefore, the NSW LPAB has proposed that a lawyer who is admitted to the profession and obtains a practising certificate as a barrister only will not be required to complete the proposed mandatory PALT.

The Committees welcome views on whether this proposal is appropriate for all states and territories, or whether additional consideration needs to be given to how the PALT requirements will affect those in states and territories with a fused profession (where they may hold a practising certificate as both barrister and solicitor).

Proposal 14

The requirement to undertake PALT should not apply to lawyers who practise exclusively as barristers.

Areas of PALT

PALT should be offered in a range of practice areas and disciplines to meet the needs of the legal profession in 2026 and beyond.

The NSW LPAB has suggested that options for PALT should be broad enough to meet the practical needs of contemporary lawyers within subject specialisation and relevant areas of practice. This may include area specialities such as criminal law, litigation/dispute resolution, immigration law, insurance law, insolvency, family law, succession, wills and estates and property law.

PALT options may also include types and places of practice, such as targeted studies for government lawyers, not-for-profit/community legal centres, in-house counsel, as

well as courses targeted on suburban, remote and regional and small/ medium and large firms

To avoid developing a specified list of PALT areas that may become outdated, it is proposed that the areas of PALT delivery be developed by a range of providers and approved by the local regulator (set out in more detail below). The Committees note that the NSW LPAB has worked with a group of experienced lawyers, members of the judiciary and representatives of the Law Society of New South Wales to develop developed a possible model for PALT in family law.⁵⁰

It is proposed that a lawyer may choose to complete PALT in up to four specialisations (each designed as a 7.5-hour course) or to undertake several training courses within the same specialisation. This means that PALT will not necessarily cover the breadth of practice areas currently covered in PLT (i.e. three mandatory and two optional practice areas), but would be more focussed on the practice area(s) in which the lawyer is working.

Proposal 15

PALT to be delivered in areas identified and developed by PALT providers, subject to the approval mechanisms set out below.

Additional practice restrictions

As noted above, PALT will coincide with the period of time for which solicitors are generally subject to a statutory condition to engage in supervised legal practice only (usually for two years).

Supervision means that lawyers can undertake nearly all work subject to “reasonable” supervision, with some restrictions. For example, in New South Wales, a solicitor who holds a practising condition subject to the condition of supervision cannot be the solicitor on the record or sign a bill of costs.⁵¹ This requirement would continue.

The NSW LPAB has suggested that it may also be appropriate to limit aspects of practice by early career lawyers until PALT has been completed. The restrictions might apply, for example, performing certain tasks unsupervised and signing (or signing off on) legal advices. This approach seeks to ensure that early career lawyers practise under appropriate supervision and continue to develop their skills in a structured

⁵⁰ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Interim Report on PLT Reform](#) (13 March 2026) at Annexure C.

⁵¹ See for example, Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 2005, r 7.1(6) and Legal Profession Uniform Law, s 188.

environment and in areas most appropriately targeted to their interests/desired practice areas.

Any such additional restrictions need to be proportionate and balanced with the need to allow exposure to such tasks over the first two years of practice. There is obvious room for argument as to what the restrictions should be

Proposal 16

Lawyers who are undertaking PALT should have further restrictions on their practice, such as, for example, restricting them from areas such as taking clients on their own and signing legal advice.

Consultation questions – PALT

13.1 Do you support a new requirement being imposed for early career lawyers to undertake 15 hours of PALT in each of the first two years of practice? Is the amount of time proposed for PALT too long or too short?

13.2 Do you think it is appropriate for this requirement be implemented as a condition on practising certificates? If not, please outline what you consider to be the preferable mechanism to impose the new requirement.

14.1 Do you support the proposal for lawyers who practise exclusively as barristers to be exempt from the requirement to undertake PALT? Would this pose any issues in your jurisdiction?

15.1 Do you support the proposal that PALT should be delivered in areas identified and developed by PALT providers, subject to the approval mechanisms set out separately below?

15.2 Do you support the idea that lawyers can choose to undertake PALT in one practice area, or up to four different practice areas?

16.1 Do you support the proposal that lawyers who are undertaking PALT should have further restrictions on their ability to practise? If so, what additional restrictions should apply?

Delivery of PALT

In person delivery

Like PLT, it is proposed that PALT be delivered in person (unless the provider grants an exemption to a student, to be considered on an exceptional case-by-case basis). This method of delivery will maximise the opportunity for engagement and skills development by early career lawyers and provide an opportunity for them to build a network of peers in their practice area.

PALT will need to be made available in regional as well as suburban and city locations.

Proposal 17

PALT should be delivered face to face and in person or, in exceptional circumstances (as determined by the PALT provider), by synchronous online learning

Approval of PALT providers

It is important to ensure that PALT is delivered at a sufficiently high standard. The NSW LPAB has recommended that PALT courses be designed or approved by, and be administered and offered by, the Law Society of New South Wales. PALT may also be offered by existing PLT providers, universities, law firms or groups of law firms, or public sector agencies (such as DPPs or Legal Aid bodies), all subject to certification by the Law Society.

The NSW LPAB has emphasised that mid-level, senior and retired members of the Law Society would be strongly encouraged to participate in PALT as a way of giving back to the profession and ensuring its competence, skill and integrity.

It is essential that the individuals delivering PALT have direct and recent experience in the areas of PALT which are being provided, given the practical focus of such courses. However, there may be issues with a law practice being the approved organisation delivering PALT as, unlike for CPD, the provider must also administer appropriately graded assessment and will need to avoid conflicts of interest with respect to employees of that practice undertaking PALT. Members of the profession could contribute to PALT delivered by the relevant Law Society, regulator or other bodies so that the delivering organisation could bear the responsibility of course approval without imposing a burden on member of the profession.

PALT courses should not simply be self-certified in the manner of CPD courses in most jurisdictions. In order to ensure the quality, rigour and consistency of the courses

(including as to assessment), it is appropriate each course and each provider should be approved by a relevant regulator.

Given that PALT is delivered after admission and is tied to the conditions on a practising certificate, it is suggested that the regulators who are responsible for solicitors' practising certificates should approve the providers.

Proposal 18

The content and providers of PALT courses should require approval by the regulator that issues practising certificates to solicitors. The providers could be local law societies, existing PLT providers or others.

Assessment

To ensure that PALT is valuable to the profession and not treated as a box ticking exercise, it will need to include an assessment of learning. Failing an assessment may require lawyers to retake the assessment or take the course again.

The implementation of rigorous assessment will also ensure that other members of the profession and consumers of legal services can have confidence in the outcomes of PALT.

Proposal 19

PALT should incorporate rigorous assessment.

Consultation questions – Delivery of PALT

17.1 Do you support the proposal that PALT should be delivered in person or, in exceptional circumstances (as determined by the PALT provide, by synchronous online delivery?

18.1 Do you support the proposal that the content and providers of PALT should be approved by the regulator that issues practising certificates to solicitors?

19.1 Do you support the proposal that PALT should incorporate rigorous assessment? Do you have any views on the parameters for this requirement?

6.6 Clinical legal education

The Committees are also interested in considering whether reforms to PLT could incorporate clinical legal education. Clinical legal education has the potential to

enhance the development of professional identity, reflective practice and ethics, while simultaneously addressing areas of unmet legal need through the delivery of legal services in the community.

Whilst there are varying definitions of clinical legal education globally, the following set of characteristics provide a helpful overview:

What is done in a clinical program should involve active learning with client responsibility, supervision focused on student development, a social justice orientation, structured reflective practice and a classroom component that assists students to learn from their experiences, with a focus on ethics and professional identity.⁵²

The same commentator has noted that: “Australian [clinical legal education] involves a blend of community service and legal education informed by social justice, reflective practice and the well-being of law students and legal professionals.”⁵³

What would clinical legal education offer?

Clinical legal education in PLT would involve a focus on student active learning via:

- close supervision by suitably qualified lawyer-educators
- client interaction and responsibilities
- a focus on student development, and
- structured classroom teaching designed to support reflective practice.

Clinical legal education differs from the PLT workplace experience requirement as it is focused on developing a “critical and analytical consciousness of law”⁵⁴ rather than the ‘how to’ of legal practice. Many law schools already offer clinical legal education experience as part of discrete elective subjects within their law degrees.⁵⁵

When would clinical legal education be undertaken?

Clinical legal education could be an additional educational step following PLT coursework, undertaken by graduates prior to admission. This would facilitate the application of core skills and values in live client settings, with a focus on supervised experiential learning.

In this model, students would complete the initial four weeks of skills and values instruction (PLT coursework), followed by a further period (perhaps four weeks) of

⁵² J Giddings, ‘Clinical legal education across the globe’ in *Global Clinical Legal Education* (Routledge 2025)

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ A Evans et al [Best Practices in Australian Clinical Legal Education](#) (September 2012).

⁵⁵ Kingsford Legal Centre, [‘Clinical Legal Education Guide: Your guide to CLE courses offered by Australian universities in 2025’](#).

practical skills development in a structured learning environment in the form of clinical legal education. In total, this would result in an eight week program of PLT, which would be significantly shorter than current PLT courses.

Would clinical legal education be mandatory or optional?

There is a question about whether clinical legal education would be a mandatory component of PLT, or an optional extra that students can choose to undertake.

If clinical legal education were to be a mandatory component of PLT, it would be an additional requirement for all law students. Mandatory incorporation of clinical legal education may improve development of practical skills before admission in a hands-on environment, with appropriate supervision. The large number of students would also be significant contribution to legal assistance. However, this would be a significant reform that would require investment and resourcing. Options for the delivery of clinical legal education are considered further below. Students would still be required to undertake PALT after admission in subjects relevant to their practice area.

If clinical legal education were an optional element of PLT, it may enable pre-admission completion of learning that would otherwise need to be satisfied by PALT (i.e. learning in a practice context where there are real clients and specific practice areas). This may mean that students who have chosen to undertake clinical legal education do not need to also undertake PALT, as they have undertaken additional training prior to admission which is delivered under supervision and supported by reflective practice. This would need to be supported by regulatory mechanism to ensure that the PALT requirement is not imposed on those lawyers.

Whether clinical legal education was introduced as mandatory or optional requirement, it is envisaged that successful completion of clinical legal education would satisfy the requirement for PLT workplace experience. Consideration could be given to providing credit for clinical legal education completed at university, for example by reducing the clinical legal education requirements for students who completed clinical legal education as part of their law course. It may be that in those circumstances some post-admission clinical legal education should still be required at a post-graduate level, appropriate for someone who will soon be admitted to the legal profession.

How would clinical legal education be delivered?

Clinical legal education could potentially be delivered by any combination of the following:

- the expansion of existing university legal clinics
- the introduction of new legal clinics by PLT providers

- collaboration between universities and PLT providers to expand existing clinics or develop new clinics
- collaborations by universities or PLT providers or suitably qualified lawyer-educators with community organisations.

PLT legal clinics could operate in similar formats to university legal clinics, supporting disadvantaged clients with free legal advice about simple day to day legal problems such as tenancy, employment, civil claims and fines. Such clinics could complement the work of the legal assistance sector, with potential for referrals from community legal centres or legal aid. Whilst PLT clinic funding would require additional consideration and exploration, it is not envisaged that funding arrangements would impact on existing legal assistance sector funding.

The delivery of clinical legal education would be a significant undertaking for PLT providers to establish and would have to be staffed primarily by qualified lawyers who are licensed to practice and are able to provide clinical supervision at an appropriate ratio. It is noted that many PLT teachers are current practitioners who would be qualified to provide clinical supervision.

Proposal 20

Clinical legal education should be included as a component of PLT, whether on a mandatory or optional basis.

Consultation questions – Clinical legal education

20.1 Do you support the Committees considering options for the inclusion of clinical legal education as a component of PLT?

20.2 If introduced, should clinical legal education be a mandatory component of PLT or an optional extra for students to undertake? If clinical legal education is a mandatory component of PLT, should students be entitled to credit for clinical legal education undertaken as part of a law degree?

20.3 If clinical legal education is optional, should completion of clinical legal education satisfy the requirements for PALT?

20.4 Who should be responsible for delivering and supervising clinical legal education?

Consultation questions – Clinical legal education

20.5 Do you support the Committees inviting a working group comprising suitably qualified educators/experts to explore how clinical models of legal education could be employed as part of PLT?

6.7 Supervision of early career lawyers

The proposals in this paper recognise feedback from the national survey that practical learning is most effectively achieved ‘on the job’. In combination with the delivery of PALT, many skills will be developed during early years of practice under appropriate structured supervision. This raises the question as to whether additional safeguards are required during the first two years of supervised legal practice.

As noted above, there is currently limited guidance on the standard of supervision that is required of lawyers in these early years.

The gaps and risks inherent in this period of early practice are acknowledged through recent work on an Early Career Lawyer Capability Framework by the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner and the capability framework developed by the Law Society of New South Wales.

There is a strong argument that these safeguards should be further considered and applied consistently across all jurisdictions, particularly if the PLT course is reduced and PALT is undertaken in the early years of practice. As noted in relation to workplace experience above, there may be a role for regulators and practising certificate issuers to assist lawyers in developing their supervisory skills and expertise (relevant to both supervision of workplace experience and supervised legal practice).

The NSW LPAB suggests additional requirements for employer involvement and supervision of early career lawyers. These include:

- requiring employers to provide structured oversight and mentorship for lawyers on a restricted certificate
- formalising the degree of employer involvement through mandatory supervision reports, structured training plans, performance assessments.⁵⁶

The Committees note that some jurisdictions already provide significant support for supervisors and supervisees. For example, the Victorian Legal Services Board and

⁵⁶ Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Discussion Paper on PLT Reform](#) (30 September 2025) at 104.

Commissioner has published a supervision plan template and other resources.⁵⁷ It would be valuable to bring regulators together to share information about what is done in their jurisdiction and how they can work together to provide consistent guidance to supervisors and supervisees during supervised legal practice. That group could also consider whether there is a need to consider any regulatory reform to support its proposed initiatives.

This approach will allow regulators to leverage work that has already been done in this space and identify improvements and solutions based on operational knowledge.

Proposal 21

Legal profession regulators should establish a working group to develop additional guidance and resources for supervisors of lawyers as part of their supervised legal practice. This may include guidance materials, templates and training sessions for supervisors.

This group should also consider if there is any need for regulatory reform to support improved supervision and develop recommendations for any such reforms.

Consultation questions – Supervision of early career lawyers

21.1 Do you think there is a need for additional guidance to supervisors of early career lawyers, to improve supervision?

21.2 Do you support legal profession regulators establishing a working group to develop additional guidance and resources for supervisors of lawyers as part of their supervised legal practice and consider potential regulatory reforms?

6.8 Practice management course

In all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory and Tasmania, it is a practising certificate condition that a legal practitioner must complete an accredited practice management course in order to be authorised to practise as the principal of a law

⁵⁷ For example, Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, [Supervision Plan Template](#).

practice.⁵⁸ Legal profession regulators have published guidance on how organisations and law practices can seek accreditation to provide the practice management course.⁵⁹

Existing practice management courses or other courses that are required before a person can obtain an unrestricted or principal practising certificate already include training in relation to trust accounting. The Committees have not identified a need for additional training to be incorporated in the practice management course.

6.9 Implementation timing

The NSW LPAB notes that New South Wales law schools have indicated that they either have or can incorporate practical training and skills in their programs by the start of 2028. This would mean that students graduating in 2027 and entering their PLT course in 2028 will not have completed a law degree which was designed and mandated to address the skills schedule.

As suggested above, it is proposed that from 2028, PLT will be a minimum of four weeks in length, with one week of additional pre-reading and preparatory work. This can be reviewed after the reforms to PLT have been in place for a period of two years and graduates have undertaken law courses that have legal knowledge and skills embedded in their delivery, at least for part of the course.

Proposal 22

It is proposed that the following transitional arrangements would apply:

- Law courses to incorporate practical training and skills in their programs by the start of the 2028 academic year
- From 2028, new PLT course to be four weeks in length, with one week of additional pre-reading and preparatory work. This can be reviewed after two years, when more practical training and skills have been embedded in law courses
- The new model of PALT and associated licensing impacts to commence at the start of 2028.

⁵⁸ Under the Uniform Law scheme, this condition is a discretionary condition imposed on all practising certificates pursuant to Legal Profession Uniform Law s 53 and Legal Profession Uniform General Rules 2015 rule 16(b)(ii). In Tasmania, a discretionary condition may be imposed for a practitioner to complete a trust accounting course.

⁵⁹ See for example, guidance published by the [Law Society of New South Wales](#) and the [Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner](#).

Proposal 22

- Any new requirements or guidance for supervisors of those undertaking supervised legal practice to commence at the start of 2028.

Consultation questions – Implementation timing

22.1 Do you support the proposed transitional arrangements and implementation timeframe set out at Proposal 22?

Appendix A: Overview of the current requirements for admission

Ref	Topic	Law Admissions Consultative Committee (LACC)	Uniform Law scheme	Other states and territories
1.	Required academic study	<p>The Prescribed Academic Areas of Knowledge (also commonly referred to as the “Priestley 11”) set out the knowledge that is required for admission. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Law and Procedure • Torts • Contracts • Property • Equity • Company Law • Administrative Law • Federal and State Constitutional Law • Civil Dispute Resolution • Evidence • Ethics and Professional Responsibility. <p>For each of these areas, there are a number of subtopics that a student is expected to know.</p>	<p>The Prescribed Academic Areas of Knowledge form the basis of the specified academic qualifications prerequisite set out in rule 5 and Schedule 2 to the Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules 2015 (Uniform Admission Rules).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Capital Territory – Court Procedure Rules 2006 (ACT), rule 3605 • Northern Territory – Legal Profession Admission Rules 2007 (NT), rule 4, sch 3 • Queensland – Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004 rule 6; Admission Guidelines for Approving Academic Qualifications Admissions Guidelines Number 1 (2019) • South Australia – Rules of the Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council 2018 (SA), rule 7; Appendix A • Tasmania – Legal Profession (Board of Legal Education) Rules 2021 (TAS), rule 4 and Schedule 1
2.	How the required academic study is completed (Accreditation of law courses)	<p>Law courses are accredited by the local state or territory admitting authority for the purpose of delivering the prescribed academic areas of knowledge.</p> <p>The LACC’s Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses set out minimum</p>	<p>Section 29 of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Uniform Law) provides that the designated local regulatory authority may accredit or reaccredit law courses or providers of practical legal training in accordance with the Admission Rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Capital Territory – Court Procedure Rules 2006 (ACT), rules 3606, 3607 • Northern Territory – Legal Profession Admission Rules 2007 (NT), rule 4 • Queensland – Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004 rule 6

Ref	Topic	Law Admissions Consultative Committee (LACC)	Uniform Law scheme	Other states and territories
		<p>standards for accreditation, for use by the admitting authorities.</p> <p>The standards cover issues relating to the delivery of law courses, including teaching hours, content of the law course, and assessment methods.</p>	<p>Rule 7(1)(a) of the Uniform Admission Rules provides that the Board may accredit a law course for the purpose of providing the academic qualifications prerequisite specified in rule 5(1).</p> <p>Rule 7(2)(a) of the Uniform Admission Rules provides that the admitting authority must take into account any appraisal criteria for such courses or providers from time to time endorsed for use in other Australian jurisdictions. This is understood to refer to the Accreditation Standards for Australian Law Courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Australia – Rules of the Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council 2018 (SA), rule 7(2) • Tasmania – Legal Profession (Board of Legal Education) Rules 2021 (TAS), rules 5 and 6 (refers to academic institution rather than course provider).
3.	Required PLT	<p>The LACC’s PLT Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers (PLT Competency Standards) set out the practical competencies required for admission.</p> <p>Required Competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lawyer’s Skills ○ Problem Solving ○ Work Management and Business Skills ○ Trust and Office Accounting • Compulsory practice areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Civil Litigation Practice ○ Commercial and Corporate Practice ○ Property Law Practice • Optional practice areas (any two) 	<p>The PLT Competency Standards form the basis of the specified PLT prerequisite set out in rule 6 and Schedule 2 to the Uniform Admission Rules.</p> <p>The provisions in relation to supervised legal training are set out in Schedule 3 of the Uniform Admission Rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Capital Territory – Court Procedure Rules 2006 (ACT), rule 3607D • Northern Territory – Legal Profession Admission Rules 2007 (NT), rule 5, sch 4 • Queensland – Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004 rules 7, 7A; Admission Guidelines for Practical Legal Training Requirements Admissions Guidelines Number 2 (2019) • South Australia – Rules of the Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council 2018 (SA), rule 8; Appendix B • Tasmania – Legal Profession (Board of Legal Education) Rules 2021 (TAS), rule 7 and Schedule 2. Note there are some local differences in relation to optional practice areas, descriptions and workplace experience requirements.

Ref	Topic	Law Admissions Consultative Committee (LACC)	Uniform Law scheme	Other states and territories
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administrative Law Practice ○ Banking and Finance ○ Criminal Law Practice ○ Consumer Law Practice ○ Employment and Industrial Relations Practice ○ Family Law Practice ○ Planning and Environmental Law Practice ○ Wills and Estate Practice ● Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethics and Professional Responsibility. <p>Students are also required to undertake a minimum of 15 days of workplace experience. The LACC has also published Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, which provide additional guidance on workplace experience.</p> <p>The PLT Competency Standards also set out how the competencies can be developed by Supervised Workplace Training (in the Uniform Law scheme, this is referred to as Supervised Legal Training (SLT)).</p>		
4.	How the required PLT is delivered	<p>PLT providers are accredited by the local state and territory admitting authority for the purpose of delivering PLT. The LACC’s Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers sets out the minimum standards for accreditation,</p>	<p>Section 29 of the Uniform Law provides that the designated local regulatory authority may accredit or reaccredit law courses or providers of practical legal training in accordance with the Admission Rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Australian Capital Territory – Court Procedure Rules 2006 (ACT), rule 3607G ● Northern Territory – Legal Profession Admission Rules 2007 (NT), rule 5 ● Queensland – Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004 rules 7, 7A;

Ref	Topic	Law Admissions Consultative Committee (LACC)	Uniform Law scheme	Other states and territories
		<p>which the Committees understand are used in each state and territory.</p> <p>The Guiding Principles for Integrating Academic and PLT Courses set out information on how PLT can be integrated into the delivery of a law course.</p>	<p>Rule 7(1)(b) of the Uniform Admission Rules provides that the Board may accredit a provider of PLT of providing the PLT prerequisite specified in rule 6(1).</p> <p>Rule 7(2)(a) of the Uniform Admission Rules provides that the admitting authority must take into account any appraisal criteria for such courses or providers from time to time endorsed for use in other Australian jurisdictions. This is understood to refer to the relevant LACC documents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Australia – Rules of the Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council 2018 (SA), rule 8, rule 9 • Tasmania – Legal Profession (Board of Legal Education) Rules 2021 (TAS), rules 8-10.

Appendix B: Regulatory bodies and responsibilities

In each state, eligibility and suitability of people seeking to be admitted as a lawyer is assessed by the local admitting authority. The admitting authorities also have functions in relation to the accreditation and reaccreditation of law courses and PLT providers.

Admitting authorities in Australia

Jurisdiction	Admitting authority
ACT	Legal Practitioners Admission Board
NSW	Legal Profession Admission Board
NT	Legal Practitioners Admission Board
QLD	Legal Practitioners Admission Board
SA	Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council
TAS	Board of Legal Education
VIC	Victorian Legal Admissions Board
WA	Legal Practice Board

The following state and territory bodies are responsible for issuing practising certificates and may also have functions in relation to delivering or accrediting CPD or the practice management course.

Bodies with responsibility for licensing requirements

Jurisdiction	Licensing body
ACT	Australian Capital Territory Law Society Australian Capital Territory Bar Association
NSW	Law Society of New South Wales New South Wales Bar Association
NT	Law Society of the Northern Territory
QLD	Queensland Law Society Queensland Bar Association
SA	Law Society of South Australia
TAS	Law Society of Tasmania
VIC	Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner
WA	Legal Practice Board

Appendix C: Overview of PLT requirements

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
A) PLT coursework and workplace experience			
1.	PLT coursework	<p>Required Competencies</p> <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyer's Skills • Problem Solving • Work Management and Business Skills • Trust and Office Accounting <p>Compulsory practice areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Litigation Practice • Commercial and Corporate Practice • Property Law Practice <p>Optional Practice Areas</p> <p>Any two of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Law Practice • Banking and Finance • Criminal Law Practice • Consumer Law Practice • Employment and Industrial Relations Practice • Family Law Practice • Planning and Environmental Law Practice • Wills and Estate Practice <p>Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics and Professional Responsibility. 	PLT Competency Standards, cl 3.1.
		<p>Course content</p> <p>1. The content of a PLT course must enable students to acquire and demonstrate an appropriate understanding, of and competence in, each element of the skills, values and practice areas set out in the PLT Competency Standards.</p>	Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.3.

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A PLT course must provide training at a level equivalent to postgraduate training. It should build on the knowledge and understanding of the law, the legal system and of legal practice which a graduate is expected to have acquired by the end of an undergraduate law degree. 3. A PLT course must introduce students to the problem of ensuring adequate and affordable access to justice for all and the role of lawyers in promoting such access through mechanisms such as legal aid and pro bono schemes. 4. A PLT course must include practical experience in using current information technology. 5. A PLT course may be designed to allow competence in one relevant area to be acquired in the course of acquiring competence in another relevant area. 6. The comparative weighting given to elective elements in the course must be indicated by reference to teaching and assessment times. 	
2.	Workplace experience	<p>On completing workplace experience, a student will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applied elements of the student's programmed training in the context of legal practice • experienced supervision by a qualified member of the legal profession in the execution of legal or law related work • acquired a basic understanding of what a legal practitioner does in the course of legal practice • critically reflected upon significant experiences obtained by the student in the course of workplace experience and considered how those experiences will influence the student's future actions. <p>A PLT provider must not approve workplace experience for a student unless it is satisfied that the student will receive appropriate legal or law-related work that includes most or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant interaction with external or in-house clients • drafting documents • legal research • using a file management system. <p>The PLT provider must be satisfied that any person supervising the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is admitted to the legal profession, and • has substantial experience in practising law, and • is currently practising law, and • is currently of good standing in the legal profession. 	<p>Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, cl 5(1).</p> <p>Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, cl 8.</p> <p>Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, cl 6(c).</p>

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
		<p>The minimum requirement for workplace experience is 15 days. A PLT provider may require more.</p> <p>The minimum requirement must be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within Australia and concurrently with or after (up to two years) completing the programmed training of the PLT course • as 2 full days per week or 4 x 4-hour sessions of workplace experience per week. <p>Any additional requirement above the 15 hours must be undertaken within Australia or (with the permission of the PLT provider) outside Australia.</p> <p>A PLT provider may grant credit towards any additional requirement of workplace experience for any workplace experience acquired by a student up to 2 calendar years before the student commences programmed training for a PLT course, if the workplace experience was acquired:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • while the student was enrolled in an academic law course accredited for professional admission purposes by an Australian Admitting Authority, and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ as part of a clinical education program, internship or externship program of that law course, or ○ in a legal office or during supervised placement in a law or law-related workplace, or • after the student has completed an academic law course, but before the student commences programmed training for a PLT course. 	<p>PLT Competency Standards, cl 4.1, 4.2. Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.8 Standards for PLT Workplace Experience, cl 7.</p>
		<p>A student undertaking required work experience must be supervised by either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Australian lawyer who has been practising for at least the two preceding years and is either in legal practice or a government, semi-government, corporate or community legal officer; or • another lawyer, if the PLT provider is satisfied that the student will acquire appropriate experience under that person's supervision. 	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.8.(c)</p>
		<p>Workplace experience must be administered in accordance with the prevailing legislative and other requirements relating to admission and workplace experience, including the LACC Standards for PLT Workplace Experience.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.8(d).</p>
3.	When PLT may be commenced	<p>In the case of a standalone PLT course, only after the applicant has completed an academic qualification in law, leading to admission to the legal profession.</p>	<p>PLT Competency Standards, cl 3.2. Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.9.</p>

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
		<p>An applicant may apply to the admitting authority for permission to commence PLT if they have no more than two academic subjects left if neither is a prescribed academic area of knowledge and they are enrolled to complete those subjects.</p> <p>In the case of an integrated program of PLT, it is the equivalent of three years' full-time academic study of law, and the program has been recognised by the admitting authority for the purpose of preparing students for admission to the legal profession.</p> <p>In the case of supervised workplace training, only after the applicant has completed an academic qualification in law that could lead to admission to the legal profession.</p>	
B) Delivery of PLT			
4.	Length of course	<p>In the case of a graduate diploma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coursework appropriate to such a diploma, and • the equivalent of at least 15 days' workplace experience. <p>In the case of training other than a graduate diploma, the equivalent of at least 900 hours' duration, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 450 hours of coursework, and • at least 15 days' workplace experience. <p>In the case of supervised legal training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the equivalent of at least 12 months' full-time work which includes a minimum of at least 90 hours' coursework. 	<p>PLT Competency Standards, cl 4.1, 4.4, Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.9.</p>
5.	Teaching and learning	<p>A person instructing or supervising an applicant while acquiring competence in any Skill, Practice Area or Value must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either have substantial current or recent experience in practising law, or • have comparable relevant qualifications or experience, and • comply with any other relevant legislative or regulatory requirements in the relevant jurisdiction. <p>The PLT provider must engage appropriately qualified people to teach the course and to assess the knowledge and competence of students. Such people must, at the time of their appointment, either have substantial recent experience practising law in Australia, or comparable relevant qualifications or experience.</p>	<p>PLT Competency Standards, cl 4.5 Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 2.1.</p>

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
		<p>Appropriate teaching and learning methods for each major element of a course must be designated.</p> <p>In whatever mode a PLT course is delivered, it must be designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable regular opportunities for interaction between students and teachers (either individually or in small groups) • provide timely feedback from teachers to students • provide adequate supervision of students, where supervision is appropriate • convey the interactive, dynamic nature, and the cultural environment of, of legal practice. <p>A PLT provider must set out the hours which a student is expected to devote respectively to on campus learning and online learning, for the course as a whole and for each of its major elements.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.4.</p>
		<p>A PLT provider must have an adequate and appropriate ratio of teaching staff to students for the course as a whole and for each of its major elements.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.5.</p>
		<p>A PLT provider must have sufficient and appropriate support services and staff to conduct the course competently. Sufficient and appropriately skilled information technology support staff must be available to deliver any online components of a course, and to support both staff and students.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.4.</p>
		<p>Course materials must be kept up-to-date and reflect current law and current practice.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.6.</p>
		<p>Those responsible for designing elements of the course must include people with appropriate qualifications or experience in designing such courses.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 2.1.</p>
		<p>Those designing, teaching or assessing elements of the course must be evaluated at least annually.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 2.1.</p>
		<p>Accommodation and teaching facilities available to a course must be both adequate and appropriate, given the nature of the course, the proposed modes of delivery and the number of students and staff.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.2.</p>
		<p>A PLT provider should have, or have access to, a library or legal information resources suitable for legal practice, which is available to support the proposed course. All students should have free and reasonable electronic or other access to the library or legal information resources.</p> <p>The library or legal information resources should be supported by adequate and appropriate staff.</p>	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.3.</p>

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
6.	Assessment	<p>Each form of PLT must employ comprehensive methods, appropriate to post-graduate training, of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing an applicant's competence, and • certifying whether or not an applicant has demonstrated the requisite level of competence, in each relevant Skill, Practice Area and Value. <p>Wherever practicable, an applicant's competence in any Practice Area should be assessed in a way that allows the applicant, at the same time, to further develop and to demonstrate competence in, relevant Skills and Values.</p>	PLT Competency Standards, cl 4.6.
		<p>A course must have formal means of determining whether, and certifying that, a student has acquired and demonstrated an appropriate understanding of, and competence in, each element of the skills, values and practice areas set out in the PLT Competency Standards.</p> <p>The course materials for each major element must clearly state the level of understanding and competence required to satisfactorily complete that element.</p> <p>Methods of assessment must be aligned with the objectives of the course.</p> <p>Various methods of assessment may be used.</p> <p>To the extent possible, each component of assessment must reflect the actual requirements of legal practice in the relevant area.</p> <p>Assessment arrangements must be designed to minimise opportunities for cheating or plagiarism by students.</p> <p>A course may provide for students to re-sit components of assessment in which they have not demonstrated the required knowledge or competence.</p>	Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 1.7.
7.	Resilience and wellbeing	<p>All PLT providers and supervised workplace training providers should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) make applicants aware of the importance of personal resilience in dealing with the demands of legal practice b) provide applicants with appropriate access to resources that will help them develop such resilience; provide applicants with information about how and where to seek help in identifying mental health difficulties and in dealing with their effects 	PLT Competency Standards, cl 4.7.

Ref	Area	Requirements	Source
		c) make applicants aware of the benefits of developing and maintaining personal well-being in their professional and personal lives, and d) provide applicants with information about how and where to find resources to help them develop and maintain such well-being.	
8.	Governance and management	<p>A PLT provider must have the financial capacity to conduct, and to continue to conduct, the PLT course.</p> <p>A PLT provider, or the institution of which it is a part, must have approved, or must undertake to the admitting authority that it will both approve and provide, sufficient funds to establish, maintain and conduct the course adequately, for the period of approval.</p> <p>A PLT provider must employ financial control systems that enable it to conduct the course competently.</p> <p>The governing body of a PLT course must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have such autonomy; and • such clearly designated functions and powers; and \be constituted in such a way, as will allow it both to govern the course effectively, and to fully discharge its responsibilities to the admitting authority. <p>A PLT provider must have a management team which gives full attention to the management of the course.</p> <p>A PLT provider must operate a fair and equitable admissions policy. A PLT provider must give prospective students sufficient and timely information which explains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the course will delivered; and • what will be expected of a student who wishes to complete the course successfully. <p>A PLT provider must apply, and be subject to, appropriate quality-assurance procedures and policies.</p> <p>Where a PLT provider collaborates with another organisation to design, manage or deliver a PLT course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the respective functions and responsibilities of each collaborator must be clearly specified and documented; and • PLT provider remains responsible for, and accountable to the admitting authority for, conducting the course in accordance with these Standards. 	<p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.1.</p> <p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.6.</p> <p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.5.</p> <p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.7.</p> <p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.8.</p> <p>Uniform Standards for PLT Courses and Providers, cl 3.10.</p>

Appendix D: Regulation of higher education

The *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (**Standards Framework**) is extensive as it captures the entire student lifecycle from admission to the award of a higher education qualification and specifies requirements such as:

- student acquisition of learning outcomes⁶⁰
- currency of curricular content⁶¹
- continual monitoring, review and improvement of courses⁶²
- validity and reliability of assessment design⁶³
- learning environment⁶⁴
- student experience⁶⁵
- teaching staff.⁶⁶

Standard 1.4.2.c of the Standards Framework provides that the learning outcomes for each course of study must encompass discipline-related and generic outcomes, including knowledge and skills required for employment and those required to be eligible to seek registration to practise where applicable.

The Higher Education Standards Framework also incorporates the Australian Qualifications Framework (**AQF**) and requires that the learning outcomes for each qualification is consistent with the relevant AQF level.⁶⁷ Most PLT courses are offered either as a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice which equate to an AQF Level 8. This takes into account that the PLT Competency Standards require PLT to be delivered as a graduate diploma or an equivalent amount of training (or as Supervised Workplace Training).

The *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth) (**TEQSA Act**) require all higher education providers offering or conferring qualifications (diploma or above at AQF levels 5-10) to be registered with TEQSA.⁶⁸ Those without self-accrediting

⁶⁰ *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, standard 1.4.4.

⁶¹ *Ibid* 3.1.2.

⁶² *Ibid* 5.3.

⁶³ *Ibid* 1.4.3.

⁶⁴ *Ibid* 2, 3.3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid* 2.3, 2.4, 5.3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid* 3.2.

⁶⁷ *Ibid* 1.5.3.

⁶⁸ *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth); *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth).

authority must also have their courses accredited by Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (**TEQSA**).⁶⁹

Once registered with TEQSA, providers must comply with mandatory conditions of registration and any other additional conditions TEQSA may impose. The mandatory conditions require:

- the registered provider must offer at least one accredited course
- each person who makes decisions that affect the whole or substantial part of the provider's affairs must be a fit and proper person
- courses are provided consistently with the Higher Education Standards Framework
- the provider complies with the tuition protection requirements under Part 5A of the TEQSA Act in the event of business continuity issues. These provide domestic student protections in the event the provider defaults, meaning fails to commence or ceases to deliver a unit or course. The provider will have to find the student a suitable replacement unit or course to transfer to or provide a refund of their upfront payments for tuition fees.
- providers must give TEQSA annual financial statements
- providers must notify TEQSA of material changes to their ability to meet the Higher Education Standards Framework or that require the TEQSA register to be updated
- providers must comply with record-keeping requirements, and
- providers must co-operate with TEQSA.

Whether a PLT provider can offer FEE-HELP will depend on whether the provider is approved as a higher education provider under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth) that is authorised to offer HELP loans.⁷⁰ The provider must offer at least one eligible course of student that leads to a higher education award, which must be an accredited course.⁷¹

⁶⁹ *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth), s 46.

⁷⁰ Note that some existing universities and certain self-accrediting entities listed in Tables A and B of the Act (sections 16-15, 16-20) are approved as higher education providers for the purposes of FEE-HELP (*Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth)).

⁷¹ *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth), 16-25(1)(da), 16-25(1)(db).

Appendix E: Overview of CPD requirements by jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Core CPD requirements	Source
Legal Profession Uniform Law (New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia).	<p>10 mandatory CPD points annually.</p> <p>Minimum one point in each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics and professional responsibility Practice management and business skills Professional skills (or barristers' skills for barristers) Substantive law (or substantive law, practice and procedure, and evidence for barristers). <p>Note: from 1 April 2025 the Rules for barristers will include Equality and Wellbeing as a mandatory CPD category.</p> <p>Note: Under the Legal Profession Uniform Law, the Law Council of Australia is responsible for developing CPD Rules for solicitors and the Australian Bar Association is responsible for developing CPD Rules for barristers (s 427).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Profession Uniform Continuing Professional Development (Solicitors) Rules 2015 Legal Profession Uniform Continuing Professional Development (Barristers) Rules 2015
Australian Capital Territory	<p>10 mandatory CPD points annually.</p> <p>Minimum one point in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal ethics and professional responsibility Practice management and business skills Professional skills Substantive law and procedural law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Profession Act 2006 (ACT) Council of ACT Law Society imposes CPD condition under s 47 and publishes guidelines. The guidelines include examples of topics to be covered for each core area.
Northern Territory	<p>10 mandatory CPD Points annually.</p> <p>Minimum one point in each of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional ethics and responsibility Practice management and business skills Professional skills in legal practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Profession Regulations 2007, Schedule 2

Jurisdiction	Core CPD requirements	Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying, addressing and preventing bullying, discrimination and harassment in the workplace (including, for example, responding to claims of sexual harassment and developing strategies for a safe workplace culture). 	
Queensland	<p>10 points of mandatory CPD annually.</p> <p><u>Solicitors</u> Minimum 1 point in each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical legal ethics Practice management and business skills Professional skills. <p><u>Barristers</u> Minimum 1 point in each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics and professional responsibility Practice management and business skills Substantive law, practice and procedure and evidence Barrister’s skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland Law Society Administration Rules 2005 Administration Rules of the Bar Association of Queensland
South Australia	<p>10 mandatory CPD points annually.</p> <p>One point in each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical legal ethics Practice management or business skills Professional skills Bullying, discrimination and harassment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council Rules 2018
Tasmania	<p>10 mandatory CPD points annually.</p> <p>Minimum one point in each of 4 areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical legal ethics Practice management or business skills Professional skills Substantive law Equality and wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law Society of Tasmania Continuing Professional Development Scheme – CPD Practice Guideline No. 4

Appendix F: Skills schedule, as developed by the NSW LPAB⁷²

Practical knowledge and skills expected of a person seeking admission as an Australian lawyer

This table seeks to identify the practical knowledge and skills expected of persons seeking admission after they have completed their law degree.⁷³

On admission all lawyers are required to work under the supervision of a suitably qualified legal practitioner. The practical skills and knowledge set out below assume that those skills will be exercised to a standard appropriate to a newly admitted lawyer subject to proper supervision.

It is proposed that all of these requirements would need to be addressed in the pre-admission PLT course unless otherwise indicated in the “Comments” column.

Most of these requirements should also be capable of development in the context and course of obtaining a law degree. That issue is addressed in the third column of the table. That does not mean that all of the skills and knowledge would be obtained to the level appropriate for an entry level lawyer by virtue only of university study. However, the development of practical knowledge and skills should be seen as part of legal education from the beginning. The matters listed below should be capable of being introduced to students in law degrees before being developed and reinforced in the pre-admission PLT course (leaving aside matters which are indicated as being ones only for universities and not for the PLT course).

The comments in the third column are suggestions as to which Priestley 11⁷⁴ subjects could address the relevant knowledge/skill. It is not suggested that such knowledge/skills can only be addressed in Priestley 11 subjects, nor that they should be addressed in all of the subjects identified. Nor would all of the listed matters necessarily have to be assessed by universities, although the extent to which they were assessed could be considered as part of the accreditation process.

⁷² Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales, [Interim Report on PLT Reform](#) (13 March 2026) at Annexure A.

⁷³ For the purposes of this table, the term “law degree” refers to an accredited *Diploma in Law, Bachelor of Laws* or *Juris Doctor Degree*

⁷⁴ Note that in this table the names of the academic areas of knowledge set out in Schedule 1 of the Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules 2015 (NSW) (“the Priestley 11 subjects”) are used although law schools are not required to cover these areas in subjects with names which align with that terminology or to cover all of the content mandated in Schedule 1 in an individual subject.

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
Communication	(i) Ability to take instructions from a client in person in relation to a simple legal matter	This could be addressed in any of the Priestley 11 subjects	We [NSW LPAB] had previously included separate reference to the ability to take instructions from a client in relation to a simple contract or corporations/partnership matter. However, we [NSW LPAB] accept the suggestion made in consultations that that ability is really a species of (i).
	(ii) Ability to provide advice to a client in relation to a simple legal matter, manifesting the ability to analyse the facts, the law and express a reasoned conclusion and/or give options in a way understandable to the client	This could be addressed in any of the Priestley 11 subjects	
	(iii) Ability to interview a witness and prepare a witness statement or affidavit	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution	
	(iv) Ability to engage in professional communication with other legal practitioners	Ethics and Professional Responsibility; although this could be addressed in any of the Priestley 11 subjects	
	(v) Ability to prepare and deliver a short (5-10min) oral presentation to a live audience (in person or online) on a legal subject and take questions	This could be addressed in any of the Priestley 11 subjects	Not required to be addressed in the PLT course
	(vi) Ability to undertake such communications with clients, practitioners and others: (a) in formal documents (e.g. letters), electronically (e.g. emails) and by direct interaction (in person, by phone or online); and (b) having regard to the nature of the audience, including with respect to life experience, sex, age, language ability, and their cultural, racial, religious and educational background		These abilities attach to the previously listed communication abilities.

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
Client relationship	(i) Understand the need to know, relate to, and service the needs of clients, doing so in a practical way taking account of the client's characteristics, financial position and objectives	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(ii) Understand the need to maintain independence as an officer of the court when doing so	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
Collaboration	Ability to work with colleagues within a team	Development of this basic skill could be facilitated in any of the Priestley 11 subjects	The practical skills and knowledge covered would include: developing collegiality; wanting to understand other perspectives and to receive feedback; the team nature of legal practice from working with support staff, to working with more and less experienced colleagues and working with counsel.
Record-keeping and matter management	(i) Understand the importance of organising and maintaining a file for each matter	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(ii) Understand the importance of creating in a timely manner and keeping written records of interactions with clients and of all steps taken in any matter	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
	(iii) Understand the importance of keeping the client informed in a timely manner of all significant developments in a matter	Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(iv) Ability to manage time and to prioritise tasks effectively, taking account of the need to ensure that costs charged to clients are reasonable and proportionate	Development of this skill to some degree should be inherent in higher education. Insofar as it has an ethical dimension, it could be touched upon in Criminal Law and Procedure, Civil Dispute Resolution, Ethics and Professional Responsibility	We [NSW LPAB] had previously considered deleting the reference to managing time and prioritising tasks effectively, on the basis that it was a generic skill. However, its inclusion can be justified as having an ethical dimension, in particular as an aspect of not over-servicing clients.
Court processes, etiquette and advocacy	(i) Ability to appear as a solicitor advocate in a short, simple court application, with appropriate understanding of court processes and etiquette	Civil Dispute Resolution, Criminal Law and Procedure. It could also be touched on in other subjects, e.g. Administrative Law.	In the civil area this could involve e.g. dealing with a return of subpoena, mention or directions hearing. In the criminal area it could involve e.g. a bail application. It is recognised that entry level lawyers cannot be expected to have the ability to run a disputed matter entirely by themselves from their first day. For the purposes of the subjects Criminal Law and Procedure and/or Civil Dispute Resolution, it may be appropriate to require students to attend a civil or criminal hearing in a

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
			court (for at least 1 day) and prepare a file note report on what occurred.
	(ii) Understand when and how it is appropriate to communicate with a judicial officer in a court matter	Ethics and Professional Responsibility, Civil Dispute Resolution, Criminal Law and Procedure	
Negotiations	(i) Ability to participate in a settlement negotiation of a simple commercial dispute	Civil Dispute Resolution	
	(ii) Ability to participate in a negotiation of the terms of a simple contract	Contracts	
Drafting legal documents	(i) Ability to draft a simple contract	Contracts	We [NSW LPAB] had previously included a separate ability of drafting a client retainer agreement. However, we [NSW LPAB] accept the view expressed in consultations that retainers are generally based on firm-specific precedents, and it is neither practical nor necessary to expect an entry-level lawyer to be able to draft one.
	(ii) Ability to draft a simple Summons or Statement of Claim	Civil Dispute Resolution	
Legal Research	(i) Ability to locate a provision in State/Territory and Federal legislation, and identify relevant Parliamentary materials and case law for that provision	Development of this skill should be inherent in obtaining a law degree	Not required to be addressed in the PLT course
	(ii) Ability to locate leading authorities relevant to a legal issue	Development of this skill should be inherent in obtaining a law degree	Not required to be addressed in the PLT course

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
Ethics, Professional Responsibility and life as a lawyer	(i) Understand the nature of the legal profession – tradition, duties, obligations, and responsibilities to the court, clients, the profession and the community (including the provision of pro bono assistance)	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	<p>Not required to be addressed in the PLT course.</p> <p>Critically new lawyers must “feel that they are part of something bigger than themselves – that is that they are part of a profession”.</p> <p>A good understanding of the ethical obligations of lawyers is fundamental. This topic is one that straddles the academic and the practical; the academic subject prescribed by the Priestley 11 must be practical to be meaningful. It is on that understanding that the required ethical knowledge is not spelt out in detail here. The focus here is on particular practical ethical issues which merit reiteration in a PLT context.</p>
	(ii) Ability to identify and address a possible conflict of interest	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(iii) Ability to prepare a short written advice on a simple fact scenario raising an ethical issue	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(iv) Understand appropriate methods of charging and billing for legal work	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	The practical skills and knowledge covered would include providing fee estimates, and the importance of accurate time recording (where used).
	(v) A basic knowledge of the principles relating to solicitors holding money on trust	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
	(vi) Knowledge of the mental health and substance abuse issues that disproportionately impact the legal profession	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(vii) Exposure to techniques to build resilience, flexibility, an ability to deal with uncertainty, to adapt to change and to cope with stress	Ability to address these matters should be inherent in obtaining a law degree	This could encompass issues of having a trauma-informed practice. That particular aspect may be appropriately addressed in the pre-admission PLT course.
	(viii) Knowledge of the nature of claims made against lawyers and of methods to manage risk	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
	(ix) Understand the importance of continuous learning, improvement, curiosity, flexibility, humility, ability to respond constructively to feedback, being self-critical and having a willingness to ask for help	Ethics and Professional Responsibility. More generally, learning to appreciate these attributes should be inherent in obtaining a degree.	
Responsible use of technology	Understand appropriate use, and limits, of AI and other technologies to serve the client's best interests, including the need to maintain confidentiality and security	Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Addressing the appropriate use of AI is also inherent in modern higher education.	The ability to use basic computer systems such as Word/Outlook/PowerPoint etc. now goes without saying.
Matters raised or considered but not included	Various further points have been raised and/or considered. The following are notable examples. However, we have to balance the desire to be comprehensive with the aim of identifying realistic and achievable knowledge and skills. We do not want to end up with a list as lengthy as the Competencies in Sch 2.		

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
	<p>We have not separately included a suggestion about “litigation philosophies” (documents first, running your case, evidence, working with Counsel, preparation of witnesses and settlement) or costs orders. We cannot duplicate everything in the Priestley 11 here and costs should be covered there in Civil Dispute Resolution (“The cost of litigation and the use of cost to control litigation”). Not all lawyers do contentious work.</p> <p>Leadership skills. We think it would be a logistical challenge to require law schools/PLT providers to ensure that every student leads a collaborative task – and we are not sure every law student needs to enter the profession with leadership skills</p> <p>Critical thinking and problem solving. These are obviously skills that lawyers need. Query if they necessarily need to be separately listed as they flow from the other skills and should also have been acquired during the course of the law degree.</p> <p>In the Ethics and Professional Responsibility entry, it was suggested we include: “Understand the importance of attestations, solicitors certificates and undertakings and the permissible use of documents obtained on subpoena or in discovery”. These matters are important but they are getting too granular.</p> <p>Sexual harassment and bullying. This is obviously a very important issue. But it is a general workplace issue, not one specific to lawyers. It is also the subject of CPD requirements post-admission, and is generally addressed by universities pre-admission. In that light, and taking account of the need not to try to crowd too much into this list, we have not included it.</p>		

Category	Practical knowledge and skills required for admission as an Australian lawyer	Where assessed simulation could be included in law degree (by reference to Priestley subjects)	Comments
	Different legal forms/entities. Query if should include a point about being able to advise clients about different types of legal form/entity that may be used to achieve certain ends. We are inclined to think it should not be included here, given it is a matter of substantive law covered in the Priestley 11 subjects of Company Law and Equity.		