

14 May 2026

Legal Services Council

By Email: submissions@legalservicescouncil.org.au

To whom it may concern,

We write on behalf of Ruah Legal Services and the Mental Health Law Centre. We are a state-wide community legal service in Western Australia providing specialist legal advice and representation to people with mental illness in the WA community.

Our community legal service relies on the assistance of volunteer law students, paralegals and people completing their Practical Legal Training (PLT) to operate our Telephone Advice Line. We also provide paralegals and students completing their PLT with opportunities to prepare legal documents, submissions, monitor case work and attend court appearances with our lawyers. We pride ourselves on providing a comprehensive legal education experience for students completing their PLT.

Many of our PLT students are referred to us by the Piddington Society of WA. We endorse the submission of the Piddington Society of WA to the Law Services Council on this matter.

In light of our limited resources, we are unable to provide a comprehensive submission to the Legal Services Council Consultation Paper. However, we wished to provide the Council with a short summary of the impact the proposed changes would have on our service and the legal profession. These are;

1. The inability to assist students with their PLT any longer – the proposed reduction in practical training will not allow sufficient time for students to comprehensively learn the requirements of our service, attend to matters and follow a legal case from start to finish;
2. The time and costs associated with training a PLT student will outweigh any benefit our community legal service will gain from their experience;
3. Students will be unwilling to volunteer for a longer period beyond their 15 days of practical training, making it a poor investment of our resources;
4. PLT students will not gain sufficient experience in practical legal representation in such a short work placement window.

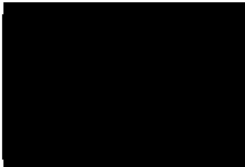
We also endorse and echo the concerns of the Regional Alliance of Justice Associations submission regarding the impact of these changes to regional, rural and remote practitioners and services.

We are also aware of current concerns raised by the WA judiciary about the reduction in quality of legal advocacy skills in WA Courts. The judiciary have called for more legal training for junior practitioners. This is a concern that will only be exacerbated by the reduced training requirements in the proposed review. In summary, Ruah Legal Services and the Mental Health Law Centre are not supportive of the proposed changes to PLT requirements in Western Australia.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide a short response to this comprehensive matter. Should you wish for further comment, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Toovey
Chief Integrated Services Officer
Ruah Legal Services and the Mental Health Law Centre