

EMBARGOED UNTIL 8 JANUARY 2024, 11.30AM

**REPORT OF THE
WORKING GROUP FOR THE REFORM
OF LEGAL EDUCATION**

January 2024

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The Working Group for the Reform of Legal Education is pleased to submit this Report for consideration.

Dated 8 January 2024.

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**REPORT OF THE
WORKING GROUP FOR THE REFORM OF LEGAL EDUCATION**

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Working Group on the Reform of Legal Education (“the Working Group”) was established, under the purview of a Steering Committee, to holistically review the legal education and training regime for lawyers in Singapore to ensure that the regime remains capable of equipping lawyers to meet the demands of modern legal practice and support Singapore’s vision for the legal industry.
2. Singapore’s legal industry plays a crucial role in supporting Singapore’s position as an international business hub and ensuring access to justice. To support these goals, Singapore must be able to deliver world-class legal services.
3. There are several trends that Singapore as an international legal services hub may be affected by, but can also benefit from: the rapid proliferation and use of legal technology; the continuing globalisation of legal practices riding on the growth of international arbitration and mediation; developments in domestic and international law; and changes in financial and trade flows arising from supply chain disruptions.
4. To ride the trends successfully and maximise opportunities for Singapore and our legal talent, the competencies required of our lawyers by businesses and society will change over time.
5. The Working Group comprises representatives from the Singapore law schools; legal education stakeholders including the Singapore Institute of Legal Education (“SILE”), Singapore Academy of Law (“SAL”) and Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (“SCCA”); and practitioners. It was tasked to review how legal education can be reformed to enable future lawyers to meet the increased and changing demands on legal practitioners. The premise is that legal education commences when an aspiring lawyer enters law school and continues throughout his legal career. The aim of the review is to ensure that all components of formal education and training, on-the-job practice and continuing education contribute to and complement the development of world-class lawyers. This will in turn create a legal profession that can keep pace with an ever-changing operating context and meet the evolving needs of the industry.
6. The recommendations of the Working Group in the Report were arrived at through extensive consultation including a gap analysis exercise. This

consultation allowed the Working Group to discern areas of concern and recommend how they can be addressed through refinements to the current system at appropriate phases of the life of a law student and lawyer.

7. The review is broadly organised into three areas: (a) formal legal education (in law school) and the Part A and Part B Bar Examinations; (b) continuing legal education (after admission as an advocate and solicitor); and (c) allied legal professionals (“ALPs”) who play an integral role in supporting lawyers.

A. Recommendations relating to formal legal education and the Part A and Part B Bar Examinations

8. The Working Group affirms that the objectives of formal legal education in Singapore’s law schools are to establish a strong foundation in core law subjects, to develop basic functional competencies needed to begin a career in the legal profession, to develop life skills and to instil awareness of the legal systems in Singapore and other relevant jurisdictions. These objectives have to be met in the context of an increasingly challenging environment where lawyers are required to provide timely and sound advice on an expanding range of subject areas. In this regard, the Working Group makes the following recommendations:

9. **First**, to maintain trust in the legal profession, the core of compulsory subjects taught at law schools should be strengthened with the express teaching of professional ethics and conduct standards.

10. **Second**, to enable Singapore lawyers to deal with cross-border jurisdictional matters and give our legal industry a competitive edge, the coverage of substantive civil law concepts should be enhanced:

- (a) in the areas of the law of obligations, business organisations and property; and
- (b) with particular emphasis on the key attributes of the civil law system in China and/or Indonesia.

11. **Third**, to strengthen essential skills required to bridge and meet client requirements:

- (a) foundational communication skills (eg, oral advocacy, writing ability and communication to suit various contexts) should be woven into the curriculum, with writing skills assessed as a component in examinable subjects;
- (b) technology and data literacy skills, contextualised for lawyers, should be infused into the mandatory curriculum for all law students; and

- (c) elements of fundamental accounting and financial concepts, customised for lawyers, should be introduced as a compulsory part of the law school curriculum.
12. **Fourth**, to expose law students to the legal industry, to provide them with experiential learning opportunities, and to enable them to make informed decisions on the suitability of law as a career, legal internships should be made compulsory for all Singapore law school students.
13. **Fifth**, to enable aspiring lawyers to better understand the public sector's perspective on the rule of law and governance in Singapore, exposure to public sector legal work should be institutionalised.
14. **Sixth**, to encourage law students to acquire an understanding of other disciplines or domains which they might encounter when dealing with clients, law schools should build on existing opportunities for exposure to interdisciplinary or non-law subjects, such as cross-disciplinary modules or electives which could be taught outside the law faculty.
15. **Seventh**, to ensure that lawyers are trained to self-learn or learn independently so as to remain relevant, regular feedback should be obtained from the law schools regarding the effectiveness of measures implemented to develop lifelong learning skills, with suggestions on any needed refinements.
16. **Last**, in view of the recommendations above relating to the Singapore law schools' curricula:
- (a) The Part A Bar Examinations should be reviewed to ensure that returning overseas graduates have competencies comparable to those of Singapore law school graduates. In particular: (i) legal professional ethics should be a compulsory and assessable component; and (ii) components of communication skills, accounting and financial concepts, technology and data literacy, and civil law, should be assessed.
- (b) The Part B Course curriculum should be aligned to incorporate elements of the recommended changes to the law school curricula, such as the practical application of accounting and financial concepts, the understanding of use of technology and data in practice, and an emphasis on legal drafting. Additionally, a substantive review of the Part B Course should be conducted at a later stage to assess the effectiveness of the (new) syllabus which will take effect from 2024.

B. Recommendations relating to continuing legal education

17. The objective of continuing legal education is to ensure that lawyers continue to cultivate in-depth domain expertise or broaden their expertise, and to hone their required fundamental competencies as well as their professional

competencies. This will enable the profession to maintain high standards and remain competitive.

18. To ensure that lawyers possess the necessary competencies at various stages of their professional career, there must be an intentional effort to identify what is required and how to meet that goal. In this regard, the Working Group recommends three broad initiatives.
19. **First**, to introduce a legal sector competency framework that provides strategic direction on the competencies envisaged to be necessary for lawyers at different stages of their professional careers (*ie*, based on Post-Qualification Experience (“PQE”) of less than five years, between five to 15 years, and above 15 years, correlated to job roles where possible).
 - (a) The framework should set out the general competencies and specific practice competencies expected of lawyers at specific PQE stages, and can be tailored to different specialist pathways or practice areas (*eg*, digital economy law, building and construction law, corporate insolvency and restructuring, and in compliance and sustainability). Overlaying this, professional ethics and conduct standards should be a required competency at every stage.
 - (b) The framework will be complemented with a training roadmap setting out the recommended courses or programmes to enable a lawyer to achieve the identified competencies.
20. **Second**, to refresh the current Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) system, to focus on upskilling and achieving the identified competencies. In this regard, the proposals are as follows:
 - (a) The CPD requirements should be harmonised to a 16-point requirement for all practising lawyers. This represents an increase from 8 points for lawyers with PQE of five to 15 years; and an increase from 4 points for lawyers with PQE above 15 years.
 - (b) For lawyers in the middle and senior categories, the 16-point requirement is to be phased in, to allow service providers time to scale up programme capacity and materials, and for law firms to plan ahead. The phasing entails moving:
 - (i) for lawyers with PQE between five to 15 years – from 8 to 10 points, from 10 to 13 points, and from 13 to 16 points, over three years;
 - (ii) for lawyers with PQE above 15 years – from 4 to 7 points, from 7 to 10 points, from 10 to 13 points, and from 13 to 16 points over four years.

- (c) CPD points can continue to be acquired through teaching but adjusted to award double points for teaching. The ability to earn all the required CPD points by teaching should be maintained for lawyers of PQE above 15 years. For lawyers with PQE of up to 15 years, a maximum of 50% of the required CPD points can be acquired by teaching.
 - (d) All lawyers (regardless of PQE) must undertake modules relating to professional ethics and regulatory matters, including obligations relating to anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism/proliferation financing (“AML/CFT/PF”).
 - (e) A stacking system should be introduced for lawyers to complete their CPD obligations over a certain number of years for suitably identified programmes that are longer or more intensive.
21. **Third**, to introduce structured training through specially curated milestone cohort training programmes for newly-qualified lawyers with PQE of up to five years. The programmes should be attended in the first five years of practice, to develop competencies most critical for the lawyer’s development early in his career.
- C. Recommendations relating to ALPs**
22. The Working Group also considered the support systems and professionals that complement lawyers in the legal profession. Specifically, the Working Group reviewed the legal education and career opportunities open to ALPs such as paralegals, and recommends the following:
- (a) Modularised stackable certification programmes should be introduced in emerging areas, such as legal technology, project management and data analytics, compliance and sustainability-related standards and functional areas such as e-discovery, with an appropriate accreditation framework. This will enable ALPs to upskill and meet the evolving needs of lawyers and the legal industry.
 - (b) To provide career progression for ALPs, ALPs with relevant work experience and endorsement from their employers should be given credit exemptions towards certain curriculum components in law school to facilitate their admission into legal practice.
23. Separately, a further review should be conducted on whether the role of ALPs can be enhanced in the medium to long term by allowing ALPs to provide legal services in limited areas of work. This includes, for example, representation in straightforward matters in the lower courts and considering whether law practices could be permitted to include ALPs’ time costs in assessments of costs.

D. Standing Committee

24. The Working Group further recommends that a Standing Committee, comprising representatives from the Singapore law schools, Temasek Polytechnic, SILE, Law Society, SAL, SCCA, the Judiciary, industry representatives and relevant government agencies, be established to drive the implementation of the recommendations. The Steering Committee will continue to provide guidance from a strategic planning perspective. This is aimed at ensuring a continued feedback loop between the evolving needs of law firms and businesses on the one hand, and the legal education curricula on the other hand.

II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. The Working Group on the Reform of Legal Education

1. The Working Group was established under the purview of a Steering Committee comprising, among other persons, The Honourable the Chief Justice, the Minister for Law and the Minister for Education. The impetus for reform arose from the concern that the formal and continuing education frameworks for law students and law practitioners have to evolve to meet the needs of modern legal practice.
2. The Working Group was tasked to holistically review the legal education and training regime for lawyers in Singapore to ensure that it remains capable of equipping lawyers with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of modern legal practice and to ultimately support Singapore's vision for the legal industry. This review encompassed:
 - (a) updates to the Singapore law school curricula, post-university education leading to qualification as an advocate and solicitor, and continuing legal education for practising members of the legal profession; and
 - (b) the role of ALPs in legal practice, *ie*, non-lawyer legal professionals employed in the legal sector such as paralegals, legal executives and legal technologists.
3. The composition of the Steering Committee and the Working Group are set out at **Annex A** and **Annex B** respectively.

B. The legal industry in Singapore

4. Singapore's legal industry has a crucial role in: (a) supporting and maintaining Singapore's position as a leading international business hub; (b) supporting domestic industries and businesses; and (c) ensuring access to justice. To support these goals, Singapore must be able to deliver world-class legal services.
5. The demand for legal services is correlated to the size of Singapore's economy,¹ demand from the wider global economy and socio-economic needs. The nominal value-added ("VA")² of legal services as a percentage of Singapore's Gross Domestic Product has been constant at about 0.5%. In 2022, the nominal VA of legal services hit a record S\$2.75 billion, a 66.5% increase from 2012.
6. Singapore's economic growth and position as a leading international business hub is driven mainly by foreign businesses choosing Singapore as a base for their Asia-Pacific operations, and foreign investments from corporate and, increasingly, private entities including ultra-high net worth private investors and family offices. They choose Singapore because: (a) the rule of law is respected and applied; (b) there is a robust and up-to-date legislative framework; (c) there is access to justice in a timely and efficient manner; and (d) there is a diverse and vibrant legal industry.
7. Singapore's legal industry aims to provide a comprehensive suite of high-quality legal advisory and dispute resolution services, and to establish a progressive intellectual property regime and world-class legal infrastructure. There are law practices dealing with the full range of local and multi-jurisdictional matters from corporate and regulatory compliance, advisory services on tax, real estate and trust matters, and intellectual property, to dispute resolution (including complex cross-border disputes) by litigation and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Singapore law practices also meet non-commercial domestic needs for legal services such as in family law, supporting the social compact of society and ensuring access to justice.

¹ Between 2012 and 2021, the nominal VA of the legal sector had a correlation coefficient of 0.99 with Singapore's nominal GDP (a correlation coefficient of 1 indicates perfect correlation).

² VA of a sector is defined as output less intermediate consumption. "Nominal" means that the figures are not adjusted for inflation.

C. Law graduates

8. Students who wish to pursue a law degree may take an approved law programme in one of three local universities³ or in one of the approved Overseas Scheduled Universities (“OSUs”).
 - (a) Singapore’s three law schools are the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law (“NUS Law”), the Singapore Management University Yong Pung How School of Law (“SMU Law”) and the Singapore University of Social Sciences School of Law (“SUSS Law”).
 - (b) As of November 2023, there are 27 OSUs in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.
9. The Singapore law schools’ annual intake has remained constant in recent years, with an aggregate admission of about 500 students each year.
10. In 2022, there were 475 local graduates from the three Singapore law schools, and 130 returning overseas graduates.

³ The Working Group notes the various degree programmes available to law students, including postgraduate Juris Doctor (“JD”) programmes that confer an approved law degree within two or three years in view of a candidate having obtained a first degree. As it would be impracticable for all permutations of degree programmes to be accounted for in providing its recommendations, the Working Group has focused largely on the Bachelor of Laws (“LL.B”) programme offered by the three law schools in Singapore. That said, the substantive recommendations, particularly those relating to additional legal content, may be adapted for application to other law degree programmes as appropriate.

D. Current pathways for admission to the Singapore Bar

11. To qualify for admission as a lawyer, local graduates must complete a four to five-year Bachelor of Laws (“LL.B”) programme or a two to three-year postgraduate Juris Doctor (“JD”) programme in a Singapore law school and attain a prescribed overall grade.⁴ Overseas graduates must meet other criteria,⁵ including passing Part A of the Singapore Bar Examinations (“Part A Exams”). Both local and returning overseas graduates must pass Part B of the Singapore Bar Examinations (“Part B Exams”) and complete a specified amount of legal training.
12. SILE is responsible for administering the Bar Examinations and upholds high standards to ensure that the Bar Examinations serve as a quality sieve for the Bar. The number of candidates for the Part B Exams has been relatively stable at around 680 per year from 2017 to 2021, with around 94% of the candidates passing the exams in that period.
13. Thereafter, a candidate must complete either six months of practice training in a Singapore Law Practice (“SLP”), or 36 months of training in certain government agencies, before he may be admitted as an Advocate and Solicitor (“AAS”). From 2024, the practice training period will be adjusted to one year across the board for all candidates.⁶ The availability of practice training contracts depends on the demand from SLPs to take on trainees, which is in turn influenced by the SLPs’ business outlook and manpower needs, as well as broader economic conditions. About 600 to 650 practice training contracts are offered by SLPs each year.
14. From 2024, a law student will spend at least five-and-a-half to six years to complete the process from matriculation in law school to admission as an AAS.
15. The Working Group acknowledges that given the limited years of formal training, there are ultimately structural constraints on what can be accommodated. The recommendations in the Report are made with these time constraints in mind. This is particularly after the Working Group assessed and

⁴ The duration of law school at SUSS Law is four to five years for its LL.B programme and four years for its JD programme.

⁵ Set out in the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2015 and Legal Profession (Qualified Persons) Rules 2015. The requirements and restrictions therein relate to how the degree programme is administered (eg, candidates are generally only allowed to take their degree programmes as full-time internal candidates, and not as part of a twinning programme or correspondence course), and the manner in which the training requirements must be satisfied.

⁶ This requirement is the result of the structural changes arising from the recommendations of the Committee for the Professional Training of Lawyers (“CPTL”). See Annex F of the Report for more information.

consulted stakeholders, and affirmed that the duration students spend in law school should remain unchanged: see [117]–[125] below).

E. Composition of and roles in the legal industry

16. Most law graduates will join private practice through law practice entities. Some may enter the profession through other routes, such as joining the Government as a legal officer or by working as in-house counsel in private entities. Some leave the industry and pursue non-legal careers.
17. As of 2023, the legal industry employs more than 14,000 individuals, of which 7,701 are practising lawyers.⁷ As of December 2022, there were 6,355 AAS who held practising certificates (“PC”). Based on the PC cohort from 2010 to 2021, on average, 56% of PC holders still held a PC after five years in practice, *ie*, about 245 out of 440 PC holders per cohort. The percentage declines to 34% of PC holders after ten years, *ie*, 115 out of 340 PC holders per cohort. Most practising lawyers who change profession or become in-house counsel do so between the third and sixth year of practice. As of October 2023, around 2,000 in-house counsel serve local companies and multi-national corporations (including regional headquarters) in Singapore.
18. The Working Group acknowledges that the various career pathways for law graduates may require prioritisation of different skills and competencies. Nevertheless, the recommendations in the Report are made to meet the needs of the legal profession and enhance the competencies of lawyers as a whole, including legal officers in the public service and in-house counsel. Broadly, legal education should equip a law graduate with the skills required to enter the legal profession and hone and enhance his skills throughout his legal career.

⁷ Practising lawyers refer to individuals who are admitted to practice law in Singapore and/or an overseas jurisdiction, and are registered as Singapore Advocates and Solicitors with the Supreme Court of Singapore or as foreign lawyers under sections 36B and 36C of the Legal Profession Act 1966 with the Legal Services Regulatory Authority.

F. Trends impacting the legal profession in the short to medium term

19. A lawyer is expected to provide sound legal advice that best enables clients to meet their objectives. This requires legal acumen and an appreciation of the broader situational context and prevailing circumstances.
20. The following are the key areas which are expected to have an impact on the legal profession in the short to medium term.

Key areas	Implications on the legal industry
Rise of Asia	With businesses emerging or expanding within the region, lawyers must increase their familiarity with civil law practices to understand and access regional markets. An understanding of civil law concepts, coupled with a foundation in common law, will give Singapore lawyers a competitive advantage in multi-jurisdictional business transactions. An appreciation of other cultures and being multi-lingual will also become increasingly important.
Proliferation of technology	Lawyers must adapt and be equipped with baseline levels of technology and data literacy to make use of technological tools. There will also be demand for legal expertise in areas related to technology. Technology may eventually cannibalise “bread and butter” work for junior lawyers and small firms, through the automation of certain types of work and new models of service delivery. ⁸
Declining resident labour force	An aging population means a smaller pool of working-age residents, which poses challenges for sustaining economic growth and meeting labour demands. Lawyers must rely on technology and upskill to accommodate the emerging manpower constraints.
Changing consumer preferences	As businesses develop in-house legal capabilities and consumers access self-help artificial intelligence (“AI”) and other tools, lawyers must better understand their clients’ needs and distinguish themselves from competitors through creative problem-solving or innovative services.
Uncertainty in areas of demand	Lawyers will have to be familiar with new frontiers where growth opportunities are. They will have to navigate areas with limited precedents and attempt to seize new business opportunities. ⁹

⁸ Kalendzhian, Suzanna. *How Technology is Changing the Nature of Work and Altering the Practice of Law, Technology, Innovation and Access to Justice: Dialogues on the Future of Law*, Edinburgh University Press, 2021, pp. 32 to 53.

⁹ Rotenberg, Aviva. *Challenges and Opportunities: Engaging a Reluctant Profession in its Own Future, Technology, Innovation and Access to Justice: Dialogues on the Future of Law*, Edinburgh University Press, 2021, pp. 250 to 266.

21. For elaboration on the above, see **Annex C**.

III. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

A. Vision – To be an international hub for legal services

22. To support Singapore's economic and social objectives, the Working Group envisages the vision for Singapore's legal industry as follows:
- (a) ensuring the quality and accessibility of legal services in Singapore, thereby maintaining trust in the legal profession, meeting domestic and societal needs and ensuring access to justice;
 - (b) increasing use of Singapore law as the governing law in commercial transactions;
 - (c) thought leadership in new and emerging fields of legal development; and
 - (d) Singapore as a regional hub for legal services in the Asia-Pacific and as a top global centre for legal services.

B. Mission and objective – To build competencies for the profession of the future

23. To achieve the vision for Singapore’s legal industry, the legal profession must be equipped and ready to meet the future needs of Singapore. It must continually evolve and keep abreast with rapid local and global changes to keep pace with competition from other legal hubs. For example, practitioners, in-house counsel and compliance officers will have to be increasingly familiar with the various sustainability-related frameworks required by institutional investors and other stakeholders. Hence, lawyers must be familiar with the local and international operating context and its wider implications for clients, and continuously update and acquire new knowledge and expertise. Moreover, technology and artificial intelligence (“AI”) will render some traditional areas of practice such as basic document drafting and review/discovery obsolete. To remain relevant, lawyers will have to move up the value chain, taking on work not easily replaceable by technology.
24. At the same time, the practice of law is not just a profession but a calling and a service for the public good.⁸ Lawyers are involved in virtually every societal facet: ensuring effective access to the criminal and civil justice systems, facilitating and upholding cornerstone rights such as in property and family matters, and safeguarding the rights of citizens. Hence, legal education must extend beyond imparting technical know-how to creating well-rounded and purposeful members of society who are equipped to meet the society’s legal needs.
25. In reviewing whether the legal profession is sufficiently equipped to deal with modern legal practice, the Working Group gathered feedback from key stakeholders (including practitioners, the Judiciary and government agencies) by conducting a gap analysis of the skills or competencies relevant to lawyers. The exercise sought views on how important each skill or competency is, and the extent to which it is currently observed in lawyers. The findings from the exercise are set out in **Annex D**.
26. In sum, the respondents generally agreed that young lawyers are largely technically competent, professional and technologically savvy. While it appeared that lawyers’ foundation in substantive law is adequately emphasised in the current system, some areas for improvement were observed. These relate to several broad categories of skills, such as the understanding of accounting and financial concepts, legal drafting and

⁸ See “Report of the Committee for the Professional Training of Lawyers”, March 2018 at paras 7 to 10.

communications (oral and written), technology and data literacy, familiarity with civil law, and familiarity with the Singapore legal system.

27. In this regard, the Working Group envisages that the legal profession will require the following competencies:
- (a) Strong foundation in core areas of the law, with the ability to build on specialist areas relevant to the future.
 - (b) Ability to identify relevant legal issues, and analyse and apply the law to real-life situations to solve real-world problems.
 - (c) Practical legal skills such as legal research and preparing legal documents (eg, agreements, legal opinions and court documents) that meet clients' needs.
 - (d) Multi-disciplinary skills to understand and bridge clients' requirements with the legal framework – eg, financial and data literacy, regulatory compliance-related knowledge, the ability to communicate in a foreign business/legal language, and an understanding of the business/market of the client.
 - (e) Ability to appreciate political and social developments (locally and internationally) that may impact a client's business, and to assist the client to find the best outcome for his legal and commercial issues.
 - (f) Ability to increase business opportunities to expand a legal practice – eg, business development and marketing skills.
28. Underlying the above competencies is the need to ensure that the legal profession remains a trusted one. In this regard, core values such of integrity and ethics are expected of all members of the profession.
29. To achieve the vision, mission and objectives, the Report seeks to re-examine the legal education framework in Singapore, from the time an individual enters law school and throughout his legal career.

C. Three phases of legal education

30. The Working Group considers that legal education can be broadly divided into three phases: formal legal education leading to a law degree, legal education leading to qualification as a lawyer, and continuing legal education.
31. The responsibility for supporting the training and development of lawyers during each of these phases is undertaken by different stakeholders. These include the law schools, statutory bodies with prescribed functions such as SILE and SAL, the Law Society, legal training providers and law practices.
32. About a quarter of law graduates who join Singapore's legal profession each year are from overseas law schools. Singapore's influence over the curricula and pedagogies of the overseas law schools is limited. The Part A Exams are thus the key means of quality control. The Government also exercises its levers through its recognition of degrees from select overseas schools for purposes of registration as a Qualified Person and subsequent admission as a lawyer.
33. The three phases of legal education form a holistic, continuous journey. Competencies and skills developed at one phase may be further developed or re-emphasised in a later phase, and some competencies and skills may be emphasised more heavily at one phase compared to another.
34. For each phase, the Working Group envisages the objectives to be achieved, and the respective service providers, to be as follows:

<p>PHASE 1 Foundation 3 - 4 years</p> <p>Formal legal education leading to a law degree</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a strong foundation in core law subjects• Introduce basic functional competencies• Develop life skills• Instil awareness of the legal system <p>PROVIDERS</p> <p>Law Schools (NUS Law, SMU Law, SUSE Law, Overseas law schools)</p>
<p>PHASE 2 Development 1.5 - 2 years</p> <p>Legal education leading to qualification as a lawyer including practice training period</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop practical application of core law subjects• Instil practice-ready vocational and life skills• Close the gap in learning, for students from overseas law schools <p>PROVIDERS</p> <p>SILE for Part A and Part B Exams, Stakeholders providing practice training (eg, law firms and government agencies)</p>
<p>PHASE 3 Enhancement</p> <p>Continuing legal education including continuing professional development for practising lawyers</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refresh existing skills at regular intervals• Develop and deepen competencies to stay relevant or broaden expertise <p>PROVIDERS</p> <p>Training Providers, Law Society of Singapore, SILE, SAL, SCCA, Education arms of law schools, Private training providers, Law firms (in-house training)</p>

35. The Working Group also considers the necessary competencies to broadly fall into two bands that apply to all three phases: (a) a strong foundation in law subjects; and (b) functional competencies. There should be a greater focus on the former band at the earlier phases of legal education, and a shift towards a balanced development of both bands over time. To achieve this transition seamlessly, every stakeholder must have a broad understanding of the entire ecosystem and how they can contribute to it.
36. In adopting this approach, the Working Group is cognisant that:
- (a) the available time for formal legal education in law school and the Part A and B Exams is relatively short, compared to continuing legal education which takes place throughout the career of a lawyer; and
 - (b) the framework must allow flexibility for lawyers to develop specialisations, pursue different legal career pathways and learn new areas of legal demand.

IV. FIRST (FOUNDATIONAL) PHASE – FORMAL LEGAL EDUCATION LEADING TO A LAW DEGREE

A. Objectives

37. The objectives of the first (foundational) phase of formal legal education should be as follows:
- (a) to build a strong foundation in core law subjects;
 - (b) to build basic functional competencies required for a legal role;
 - (c) to develop life skills, including learning skills; and
 - (d) to instil awareness of the legal system in Singapore and other relevant jurisdictions.
38. To support Singapore's vision to be a legal hub, a law school should:
- (a) equip law students with baseline competencies to begin a career in and contribute to the profession (whether as practitioners, in-house counsel, public legal officers or in academia); and
 - (b) enhance thought leadership through its academic work.⁹
39. To achieve the above objectives:
- (a) The first phase of formal legal education has traditionally focused on developing a strong foundation in the law. This is and continues to be necessary as most law students' first brush with legal concepts is in law school. In this regard, law school education seeks to develop a systematic understanding of a core body of legal knowledge.¹⁰
 - (b) Additionally, to prepare law students for the profession, law school education should equip students with essential legal thinking skills (eg, how to organise, analyse, criticise, synthesise and problem-solve) and practice-oriented skills (eg, in legal research, writing and communications). This should include the ability to inquire, process information and curate knowledge, and simply, learning to learn.¹¹

⁹ As this objective does not fall within the purview of the Working Group, it will not be dealt with in the Report.

¹⁰ See for example, the Priestley 11 core group of subjects.

¹¹ There are existing efforts to impart such skills at the three law schools, as part of the Ministry of Education's ("MOE") overarching LifeSkills curriculum framework for all students at the Institutes of Higher Learning. Details of these efforts are provided at footnote 26.

- (c) Further, law students should learn how to apply the law to real-life situations, which in turn requires them to acquire multi-disciplinary skills to understand client requirements.

40. Each of the three Singapore law schools has its own pedagogical identity and programme emphasis. Each law school requires an average of 2.5 to 3 years of curriculum time to complete the core law subjects, leaving about 1 to 1.5 years for other components of university education such as non-law electives, exchange programmes and industry attachments. A broad overview of the typical components of a student's degree programme in each law school is as follows:

NUS Law (4 years)

Compulsory Core LL.B Curriculum 2.5 years	Optional Exchange Programme 0.5 years	Electives 1 - 1.5 years
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SMU Law (4 years)

Compulsory Law Core with Law Capstone (17.5 CU)*	Law Electives (8.5 CU)	University Core (6 CU)	Law-related (2 CU)	Non-law (2 CU)
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* Minimum 10-week internships undertaken during term breaks and optional 6-month exchange programme. Students are required to complete 36 Credit Units worth of courses over 4 years.

SUSS Law (Approximately 4.5 years)

Compulsory Core LL.B Curriculum 3 years	Law Electives 0.5 years	Non-law Electives 0.5 years	Legal Clerkship Programme 0.5 years
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41. There are constraints faced by the law schools in meeting the objectives of formal legal education:

- (a) The breadth and depth of skills which a law student is expected to gain in law school place competing demands on curriculum time and resources. This can be difficult to balance.
- (b) Law schools face increasing demands to respond quickly and nimbly, to include a more diverse breadth of content within their curricula and to cater for emerging practice areas and new competencies. Whilst ensuring law students develop a strong foundation in Singapore law, law schools have to provide students with a global perspective and outlook.

42. To address the above constraints:

- (a) Law schools are exploring new ways to deliver content, including more application-based and practical modes such as clinical modules, moot court programmes and immersion programmes.
 - (b) Where there are finite resources to deal with new or emerging areas of the law, and in which there may be few subject-matter experts within the faculty or the university to teach them, law schools are relying on practitioners or adjunct faculty to address this resource gap.
43. As such, any changes to the law school curriculum should consider:
- (a) how the core substantive law modules can be improved to address any gaps in the law student’s foundational legal knowledge;
 - (b) what other non-law modules and/or subjects can help a law student better prepare for the demands of the profession; and
 - (c) what other skills are required to more effectively impart the above, without overloading the law student or stretching the existing education framework too thin.
44. The Working Group considered the changes required to enhance the current framework to achieve the outcome of a future-ready lawyer and framed its recommendations within that rubric as follows.

Key outcome	Recommendations
Reinforce the core of legal subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional conduct standards and ethics to be taught at law school, and at regular intervals thereafter. • Enhance substantive civil law components (especially in Chinese and Indonesian law) beyond comparative law.
Acquire multi-disciplinary skills to better understand and bridge client requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen foundational and vocational communication skills. • Mandate technology and data literacy components. • Mandate basic accounting and financial concepts, customised for lawyers.
Emphasise additional competencies which are marketable and relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandate legal internships. • Institutionalise exposure to public sector legal work. • Offer more cross-disciplinary modules or electives, and minors in other disciplines.
Ability to learn independently , in order to acquire new skills, build specialisation or deal with emerging or new areas of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place emphasis on the importance of “learning to learn” by incorporating a module or seminars to support it as a mindset and life-skill.

45. In recommending changes or enhancements to the law school curriculum, and in view of the limited duration of law school, the Working Group notes the following:
- (a) The need for law students to have a strong foundation in core law subjects must be balanced against the need to equip them more broadly with foundational and life skills to begin a legal career and hone their vocational competencies while working.
 - (b) In view of the limited duration of law school, any proposed additions to the curriculum may require the existing curricular components to be tweaked or condensed.
 - (c) As legal issues often span several areas of law, fundamental legal concepts should not be taught in isolation but conveyed in conjunction with other legal (and non-legal) concepts where possible.
46. Hence, an approach to formal legal education which covers a broad base of knowledge and fosters the integration of knowledge, adaptability, resourcefulness and agility in thinking is preferred.

B. Reinforce the core of legal subjects

47. Singapore law schools maintain a core of compulsory subjects, supplemented by various law and non-law electives and experiential components such as attachments and exchange programmes. This core comprises the subjects generally taught in common law degree programmes similar to those which are based on the Priestley 11¹² framework, although there is some variation from the framework and in how law schools teach these subjects.
48. A summary of each Singapore law school's compulsory subjects for their respective LL.B programmes is as follows (with comparable modules set out in the same row):

¹² This refers to Administrative Law, Civil Dispute Resolution, Company Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Ethics and Professional Responsibility, Equity and Trusts, Evidence, Constitutional Law, Property and Torts, which are the 11 prescribed areas of knowledge required for admission to the legal profession in Australia. Although the Priestley 11 is often used as shorthand to refer to "core" law subjects, not every single element of the Priestley 11 is part of the core in Singapore law schools: for instance, NUS Law and SMU Law do not cover civil procedure, which is part of the Priestley 11, in their core.

NUS Law	SMU Law	SUSS Law
Legal Analysis, Research & Communication	Legal Research and Writing 1 and 2	Critical Thinking & Legal Interpretation
		Legal Writing & IT Essentials
Singapore Law in Context	Singapore Legal System	Legal Methods & the Singapore Legal System
Company Law	Corporate Law; Law of Business Organisations	Law of Business Organisations
Constitutional and Administrative Law		
Law of Contract	Contract Law 1 and 2	Contract & Civil Litigation
Law of Torts		Torts, Litigation & Evidence
Criminal Law		Criminal Law, Procedure and Evidence 1 and 2
Evidence	Law of Evidence	
Principles of Property Law	Law of Property	
Equity & Trusts	Law of Equity & Trusts	Equity & Trusts
Either Trial Advocacy or Corporate Deals		Trial Advocacy
	Ethics and Social Responsibility (Law)	Ethical Legal Practice & Client Care
Introduction to Legal Theory	Legal Theory & Philosophy	
Legal Systems of Asia	Comparative Legal Systems & Commercial Conflict of Laws	
Law and Technology		
Quantitative Reasoning with Data		
		Family Law & the Family Justice Courts 1 and 2
		Introduction to Social Services
		Wills, Probate & Administration
		Mediation Advocacy
		Introduction to Forensics

49. The Working Group considers the core of compulsory subjects to continue to be necessary and relevant. However, ethics and professional standards which are key to maintaining trust in the legal profession would benefit from greater emphasis. The strong foundation in legal concepts should be coupled with an understanding of ethics and professional standards in practice. To reinforce the core of compulsory subjects, the Working Group recommends:

- (a) that professional conduct standards and ethics be expressly imparted at law school and re-emphasised regularly throughout a lawyer's career; and
- (b) that substantive civil law components (such as in Chinese and Indonesian law) be enhanced beyond comparative law.

1. Professional conduct and ethics

50. The focus of the Working Group's review is not on moral ethics (*ie*, the ability to discern between right and wrong) which applies to every individual, but on professional ethics and conduct standards in the context of legal practice.

51. The Working Group notes that the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee ("Ethics Committee") was established in January 2023 for the purpose of "re-establishing the moral centre and values of the profession"¹³ for existing and aspiring lawyers.

(i) *Current state*

52. NUS Law has embedded the core elements of legal ethics into certain core courses and electives. These core elements are the duty to the court, the duty to the client and the duties as a member of an honourable profession. SMU Law has a compulsory course on Ethics and Social Responsibility, and includes elements of professional ethics in some substantive law courses, including court etiquette, professional identity, professional privilege and applied ethics. SUSS Law has a compulsory module on Ethical Legal Practice and Client Care, which includes ethical principles, a lawyer's responsibilities and professional etiquette.

(ii) *Recommendations*

53. As the Ethics Committee will make detailed recommendations on this matter, the Working Group recommends that law schools should continue to expressly teach professional ethics and conduct standards in the context of legal practice through discrete modules and/or as applied ethics within existing substantive law courses. These components should include instruction on the duties and obligations of a lawyer, including specific guidance on the professional conduct requirements under the Legal Profession (Professional Conduct) Rules 2015.

54. As professional conduct and ethics are viewed as a whole-of-career obligation, it is further recommended that they should be reinforced at regular intervals as

¹³ See the "Response delivered at the Opening of the Legal Year 2023" by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, 9 January 2023 at para 28.

a mandatory component in Part A and Part B and in continuing legal education (see the respective sections below).

2. Familiarity with civil law concepts

55. Familiarity with civil law concepts is increasingly important.

- (a) Singapore is a regional and international business hub, with substantial trade and investment ties with nations such as China, Indonesia and Vietnam, all of which are civil law jurisdictions. Businesses operating in such jurisdictions require legal support and expertise which often involve application of the laws of these jurisdictions. A lawyer who can effectively manage the common law–civil law divide will have a competitive advantage in dealing with multi-jurisdictional transactions.
- (b) With the increasing number of multi-national corporations and family offices based in Singapore, in-house legal counsel who understand and appreciate the nuances between different legal systems will be better able to value-add than those without such familiarity.
- (c) Multi-jurisdictional issues and concepts are not confined only to commercial transactions but also occur in areas of personal law such as family law (eg, in relation to the division of matrimonial assets located in more than one jurisdiction).

(i) *Current state*

56. Mandatory civil law content in the three law schools is currently covered in comparative law modules:

- (a) NUS Law requires students to complete a mandatory “Legal Systems of Asia” module, as well as a module of their choice on the law of a civil law country such as China, Indonesia or Korea.
- (b) SMU Law covers civil law concepts in its core courses of “Singapore Legal System” (where the Chinese legal system is used for comparative study) and “Comparative Legal Systems” (which focuses on civil law systems in Southeast Asia).
- (c) SUSS Law has a topic dealing with Civil Law in its compulsory Year 1 Boot Camp suite of courses.

(ii) *Why reform is required / gaps identified*

57. Consultations with the legal industry raised mixed reactions on whether young lawyers should be familiar with civil law. While a segment saw this as a “good-to-have”, its usefulness is heavily dependent on whether the law practice is or plans to be involved in multi-jurisdictional work. Practitioners commented that

the value of civil law knowledge is strongest when advising on cross-border issues.

58. However, as Singapore is a regional hub for businesses operating from many jurisdictions with civil law systems and as multi-jurisdictional issues also occur in personal law, lawyers should have a basic understanding of the substantive laws, preferably of China and/or Indonesia, in the most pertinent areas to support the industry and maintain Singapore's status as a business hub. This would enable them to identify potential foreign law issues which need to be addressed and, where necessary, instruct and work effectively with local lawyers qualified in those jurisdictions. The focus of the current content provided by the Singapore law schools (most of which is delivered through compulsory modules – see [48] above) should be sharpened with these objectives in mind.

(iii) *Recommendations*

59. It is recommended that students be exposed through standalone modules or by incorporating elements of civil law within compulsory modules to the core tenets of specific civil law systems of the region in so far as they relate to basic aspects of civil and commercial practice. These compulsory modules should cover, at minimum, basic elements of the law of obligations, business organisations and property, preferably of China and/or Indonesia. It is recommended that for SUSS Law, which has a specific pedagogical focus, students should be exposed to elements of family law in specific civil law jurisdictions as well. The aim is to equip students with a foundational understanding of civil law relating to common aspects of civil and commercial practice, and with the ability to understand different treatments of issues or legal problems. In this regard, a summary of the elements of civil law which the Working Group recommends that law schools should cover is set out at **Annex E**.

60. To enhance students' exposure to civil law content, law schools could offer: (a) internships or work attachments with relevant entities (eg, law firms and law schools of universities) in civil law jurisdictions; (b) experiential learning through short programmes to such jurisdictions, organised by the law school;¹⁴ and (c) webinars and seminars (which may be pre-recorded).

61. Given the limited expertise on civil law available in Singapore, law schools should consider sharing or tapping on mutually available resources within and

¹⁴ For a similar idea, SMU offers university-wide electives for project experiences in Shenzhen and Taiwan, where students visit these places for greater experiential learning and cultural immersion.

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among the schools. This could include cross-deploying resources for existing civil law courses or programmes.

C. Acquire multi-disciplinary skills to better understand and bridge client requirements

62. Apart from legal knowledge, a lawyer must be able to communicate clearly with clients and relevant stakeholders. Further, many areas of legal practice require a lawyer to have sufficient understanding of commercial issues and concepts to understand his client's legal position. Hence, beyond core legal skills, the Working Group identified legal-adjunctive skills it considers essential for legal practice today, namely foundational and vocational communication skills; technology and data literacy; and an understanding of accounting and financial concepts.
63. The Working Group recognises that expertise in the above legal-adjunctive skills may be limited in the law schools. Law schools should consider tapping on expertise from other faculties in their respective universities or from a common pool of experts that can be shared among the universities to better utilise available resources.

1. Foundational and vocational communications skills

64. Effective communication skills, persuasive arguments and clear delivery are essential for a successful lawyer in any practice area. A lawyer must be able to articulate complex legal concepts and ideas concisely, using minimal (if any) technical jargon, to be easily understood by a layperson. Further, a lawyer must be able to convince and influence others. Hence, lawyers must develop good communication skills to be able to give clear advice and make cogent arguments.

(i) Current state

65. Communication skills, in particular legal writing, are generally taught as a standalone core module by the Singapore law schools early in the curriculum:
- (a) NUS Law has a compulsory foundational course, "Legal Analysis, Research & Communication", which covers oral and written communication skills, including oral advocacy through mooting and oral and written advice. Students also learn practice-specific skills through the "Trial Advocacy" or "Corporate Deals" modules.
- (b) SMU Law has a compulsory "Legal Research and Writing" course which includes a mandatory mooting assignment and legal writing assignments. It also offers training in oratory skills via its moot programme, writing competitions and coaching programmes for students who want additional feedback on and help with their written work.

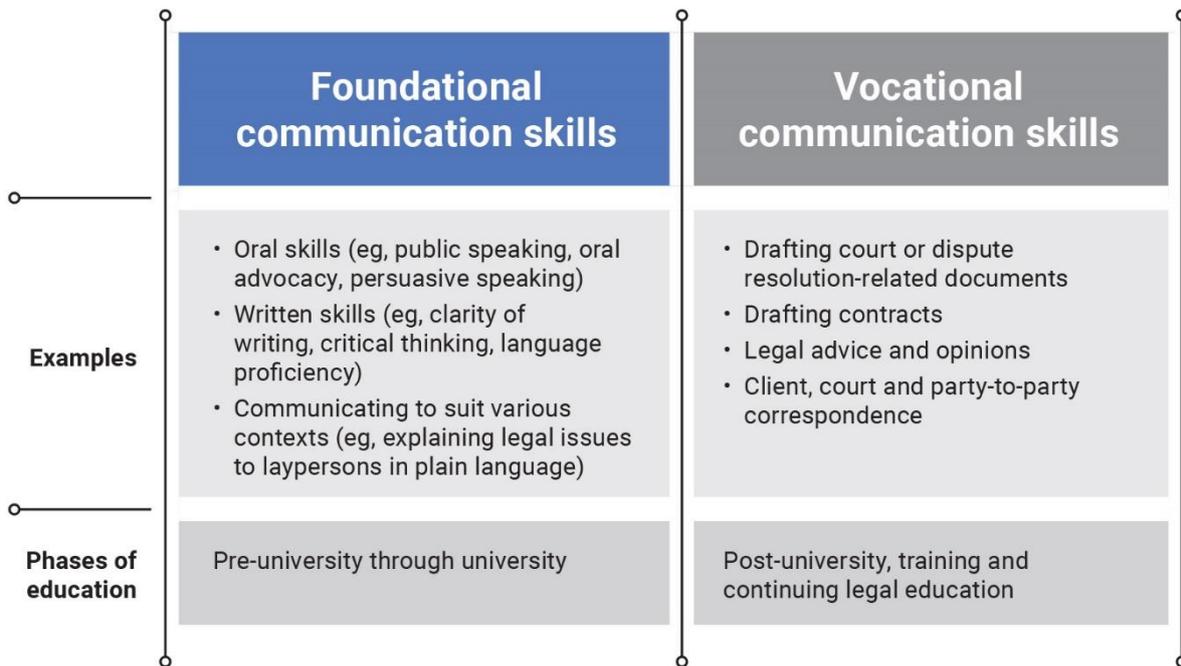
- (c) SUSS Law has a compulsory course on “Legal Writing and IT Essentials”, which covers writing legal arguments and advising clients in plain English.

(ii) *Why reform is required / gaps identified*

- 66. A law student entering law school should generally possess a strong foundation in language and communication skills. Hence, the effort required to close the gap between effective language skills and effective legal communication skills in law school should be manageable by both the law schools and students.
- 67. The Singapore law schools provide opportunities for students to practise drafting legal advice and opinions, and oral and written advocacy. However, opportunities for individualised coaching and feedback on written work are limited, and the law schools have highlighted the need to bring on board additional writing coaches or legal practitioners to provide tailored training in communication skills to all students.
- 68. Based on industry feedback, while young lawyers are generally competent in formal writing, they are less able to adapt their writing and oratory skills to suit specific contexts. In particular, they are generally better prepared for communications with the courts and fellow practitioners than they are for communications with clients and laypersons. However, there is no objective measure of the gold standard for written and oral communications. As some senior practitioners have explained, there are variances in house styles and personal preferences among firms and supervisors. The level of proficiency attained by a young lawyer is dependent largely on the guidance provided by mentors within the firms. The Working Group is thus of the view that there should be some alignment in the baseline writing and oratory competencies.

(iii) *Recommendations*

- 69. Legal communications skills may be categorised into “vocational” and “foundational” communication skills. A non-exhaustive list of competencies that fall into each category is as follows:



70. Foundational communication skills are applicable to all vocations and should ideally be inculcated before university. Vocational communication skills specific to legal practice are highly contextual and would be better acquired in tandem with exposure to real-world situations. Hence, while law schools can familiarise students with vocational communication skills, these skills should be honed after graduation, either through the Part B Exams or learning on the job when such skills would become most relevant to an individual intending to practice law.
71. The role of law school should hence be to develop foundational communication skills (building on an assumed baseline of competencies already established at the point of entry) and to familiarise students with vocational communication skills. The Working Group recommends that law schools introduce programmes or components that strengthen foundational communication skills. The Working Group recommends not being overly prescriptive on how such skills should be imparted. However, it is recommended that good writing skills should be a factor expressly taken into account in the current assessment framework, such as in the assessment rubric for examinations and research papers within the current compulsory programmes. This includes being able to communicate to suit different contexts, and to write clearly and plainly. For example, exercises can be woven into the core law modules that require the student to draft correspondence or advice in a particular format and context, and work can be assessed for writing style in addition to substantive legal content.

2. Technology and data literacy

72. The rapid proliferation of technology, the impending global manpower crunch, and the need to provide value-added services under increasingly compressed timelines, requires lawyers to: (a) have a baseline familiarity with legal issues arising from technology; and (b) leverage on technological tools to augment their practice, ameliorate resource constraints and provide the best possible legal support to their clients.

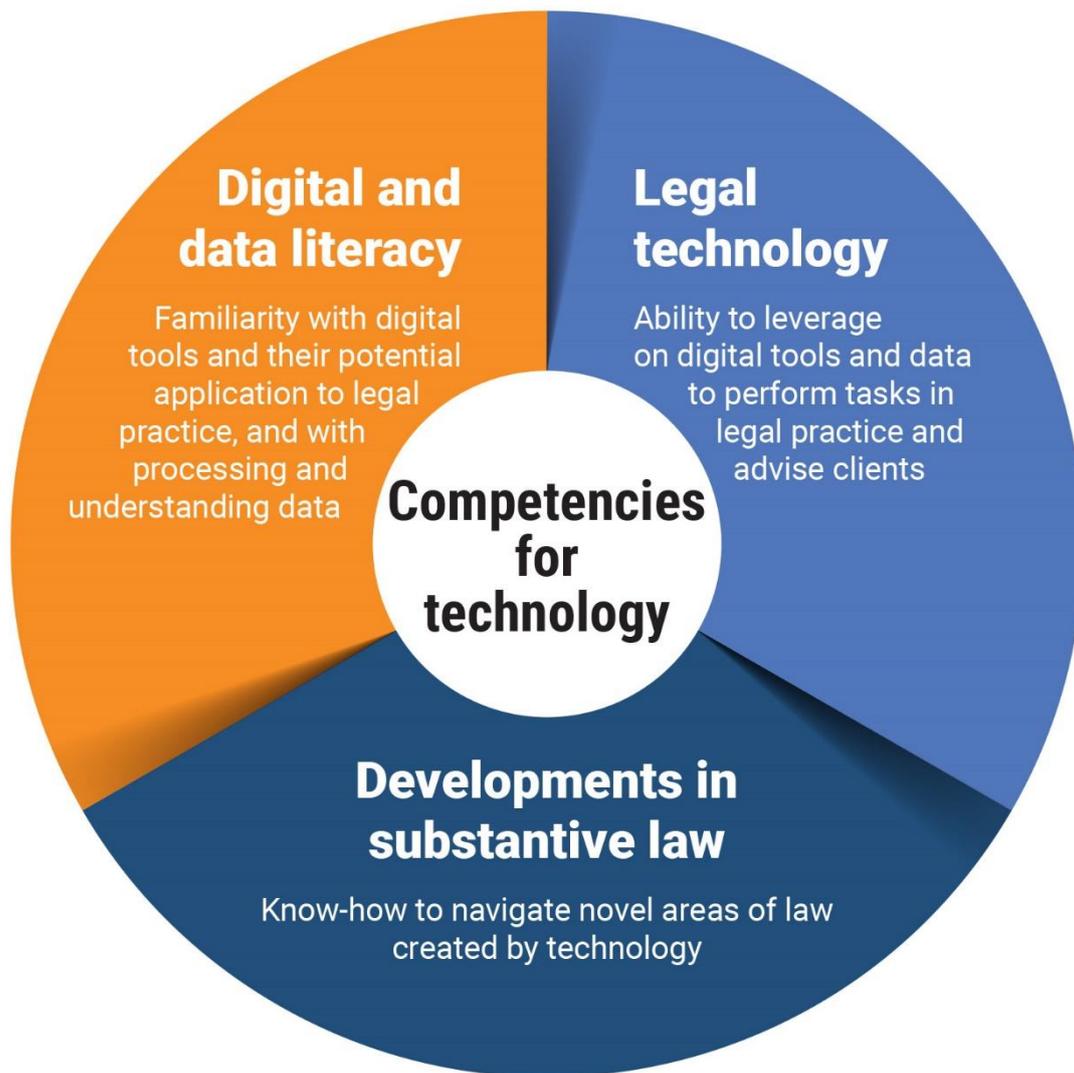
(i) *Current state*

73. The current generation of law undergraduates are digital natives, having grown up in an era where technology is prevalent. While they are generally comfortable with using technology, it cannot be assumed that they are able to harness technology (in particular, legal technology) or data in their work. In this regard, the law schools have introduced specialised modules in recent years to fill this knowledge gap:

- (a) As of AY2022, NUS Law has made two courses compulsory: (i) “Law and Technology”, which covers legal issues in technology and the use of technology in legal practice; and (ii) “Quantitative Reasoning with Data”, which introduces students to, among other areas, data types, data manipulation, basic statistical analysis, hypothesis testing and visualisation.
- (b) SMU Law has infused legal issues raised by the application of new technologies into some core law courses, eg, crypto assets in the “Law of Property” course. SMU Law also provides students with basic exposure to data literacy and management through its “Business Data Management” and “Introductory Statistics” electives. It also offers law and technology electives such as “Digital Intelligence for Lawyers” and “Introduction to Large Language Models, GPT and Legal Technology”, and has introduced a “Law and Technology” specialisation track for interested students.
- (c) SUSS Law has a compulsory module on “Legal Writing and IT Essentials”, which covers the use of eLitigation and LawNet for legal research and the preparation and/or presentation of documents. It also offers an optional “Emerging Technologies and the Law” module, which covers issues arising from emerging technologies and how to employ information technology in legal work. SUSS Law is also working to embed elements of technology into its criminal law module (eg, to study how technology can shape traditional offences and give rise to new offences) and contract law module.

74. It was also observed that most practitioners understood the value of technology and data but did not know where to begin implementation for specific use cases. Additionally, the industry acknowledged that the need for technological and data proficiency in today's legal practice also poses a challenge to more seasoned practitioners, many of whom are struggling to keep up with the rapid pace of change in technology.
75. Separately, novel technologies generate new legal issues, which are increasingly complex and constantly evolving. These include issues relating to cybersecurity, intellectual property, regulatory matters such as data privacy/protection and cryptocurrencies, and liability issues arising from autonomous technologies and AI.
- (ii) *Why reform is required/gaps identified*
76. While the technological tools that lawyers use may vary due to factors such as their practice specialisations or their firm's scale of operations or budget, it is nonetheless important for law students to be familiar with leading legal digital tools. This is especially important in view of the rise of AI, which can not only augment a lawyer's work, but replace routine elements thereof so as to enable lawyers to analyse more complex legal questions and reduce their costs in doing so.¹⁵
77. Further, as new legal issues arise from novel technologies, it is imperative for Singapore lawyers to have a fundamental understanding of and a baseline ability to navigate such issues (even if they do not possess in-depth domain knowledge). This will give them a competitive edge over their peers in other jurisdictions.
78. The challenges posed by technology are distilled into three distinct competencies which the Working Group assessed that lawyers should be proficient in: *ie*, (a) digital and data literacy; (b) legal technology; and (c) developments in substantive law.

¹⁵ Yoon, Albert H. *The Post-Modern Lawyer: Technology and the Democratisation of Legal Representation*, The University of Toronto Law Journal, Vol 66 No 4, 2016, pp. 456-471.



(iii) *Recommendations*

79. The three competencies, while complementary, require different approaches to instil. The Working Group assesses that the competencies on digital and data literacy, and developments in substantive law, are necessary to the foundational objective of law school. The former competency should, to a significant degree, already be addressed when the law schools implement the Ministry of Education’s (“MOE”) framework for Digital Baseline Competencies for students in institutions of higher learning. Conversely, the use of legal technology tools (eg, case management software, document management systems and e-discovery software) and specialisation in technology-related areas of law are more contextual and vocational in nature and should be left largely to the post-university or training stages and through continuing legal education.
80. It is acknowledged that law schools are already offering technology-related electives or introducing related components into existing modules (see [73])

above). The Working Group recommends that law schools should proactively infuse elements of technology and data literacy skills, contextualised for lawyers, into the mandatory curriculum for all law students. While the exact medium for doing so can be left to the law schools,¹⁶ topics covered should include the following:

- (a) On data literacy – introducing concepts on the importance of data and best practices on responsible handling and use, basic analytical methods and use of common data analytics tools such as Tableau or Python to support legal research and derive insights.
- (b) On legal technology tools – imparting awareness of commonly-used applications such as case management software and their fundamental application in legal work. This can complement the existing training on legal research proficiencies such as the usage of legal databases like LawNet, LexisNexis and Westlaw.
- (c) On new legal issues raised by emerging technologies (such as AI) – incorporating elements of such issues into the existing substantive content. This would be complemented by the work being done to incorporate MOE’s general competencies on familiarity with technology issues. The desired outcome is to equip students with the acumen and habit of keeping abreast with technology and the legal and ethical issues that arise therefrom.

- 81. The objective is for law students to have broad baseline knowledge and skills in the three competencies.
- 82. Students who are interested in technology should be encouraged and supported to develop these interests. The SMU Legal Innovation and Technology Club currently organises an annual Hackathon. Law schools should continue to encourage such initiatives to provide adept students with the opportunity to develop real-world projects using technology. Depending on demand, law schools should offer electives, modules and/or a minor specialisation in data and/or technology to accredit students who display aptitude in this area.¹⁷

¹⁶ Possible constraints on hiring dedicated experts in the technological field, particularly those who are also experts in technology and law, are noted. Law schools may wish to address these constraints by seeking external experts for particularly technical components, tapping on the faculty in their broader institutions where possible to co-develop and co-deliver such courses or by offering technology-related elements within existing modules.

¹⁷ An example of this is SMU Law’s specialisation track (introduced in March 2023) for interested law students to pursue relevant electives in key and emerging practice areas through a “Corporate Transaction: Law and Technology” track.

83. The Working Group further recommends that technology and data literacy be reinforced at Part B under the Contemporary Legal Practice module (see [139] below).

3. *Accounting and financial concepts*

84. To support their clients' business transactions, lawyers must have a sufficient level of familiarity with accounting and financial concepts to understand information from their clients and know how to ask experts the right questions. For example, disputes lawyers must understand how to use financial and numerical data to make effective legal arguments. Mergers and acquisitions lawyers must understand an entity's financial statements in negotiating deals. Such knowledge is equally important in fields like family law (eg, in the identification and division of matrimonial assets) and in-house legal work.

(i) *Current state*

85. Currently, the extent to which accounting and financial concepts are emphasised varies across the law schools:

(a) NUS Law offers a "Business & Finance for Lawyers" elective, and other specialised electives on law and finance in particular fields (eg, "Aviation Financing"). Some basic financial concepts are also taught in the compulsory "Company Law" course, though the coverage varies across teachers.

(b) At SMU Law, most students take at least one quantitative course ("Finance for Law", "Financial Accounting for Law" or "Introductory Statistics") as part of the school's requirement for students to complete at least two courses from an adjacent discipline.¹⁸

(c) SUSS Law offers an elective, "Introduction to Financial Reporting for Lawyers", which covers topics such as interpreting financial statements and reports, accounting processes and terminology.

(ii) *Why reform is required/gaps identified*

86. Based on industry feedback, young lawyers possess limited ability to read and interpret financial documents and have an inadequate understanding of accounting and financial concepts. Some practitioners felt that these weaknesses hamper the ability of young lawyers to advance strong arguments in commercial disputes.

87. These observations did not apply to lawyers who had taken finance or accounting-related modules (usually as an optional elective), graduates from

¹⁸ 100% of the graduating cohort of 2023 at SMU Law took at least one quantitative course.

the JD programme who had a previous degree in a business-related field, or those who had learnt financial concepts on their own. The general sentiment was that the lawyers who did not do any of the above were averse to dealing with numbers and financial statements.

88. As business and financial activity in Singapore increases and becomes more complex, lawyers without basic financial skills may become increasingly uncompetitive. While law schools should continue to encourage students who are inclined towards finance-related areas of law to pursue relevant electives, this does not address the need for all lawyers to acquire a baseline level of competence in this area.

(iii) *Recommendations*

89. Elements of accounting and financial concepts, customised for lawyers, should be introduced as a compulsory part of the law curriculum. A law student is not expected to possess an in-depth understanding of financial concepts or documents but should have some basic understanding so that he can interpret relevant financial documents to give proper legal advice or advance a case effectively in court. The Working Group recommends, at the initial stage, that aspiring lawyers should be familiar with the following basic concepts by the time they graduate from law school:

- (a) understanding basic accounting documents such as financial statements, balance sheets, profit and loss statements, and corporate and financial reports;
- (b) understanding basic financial vocabulary such as revenue, expenses, cash flow, equity, capital, stocks and bonds; and
- (c) understanding how common securities, such as charges, work.

90. The above may be introduced as a tailored programme or by infusing the concepts into the core compulsory subjects (eg, Company Law). Where there are synergies, the law schools should tap on other faculties such as the accounting or business schools for such expertise.

91. The Working Group recommends that the Standing Committee, in consultation with the law schools and industry, determine the areas of focus and how they should be implemented, and regularly review the programme for its relevance and effectiveness.

92. The Working Group further recommends that these components of accounting and financial concepts should continue to be reinforced and assessed during Part B (see [139] below).

D. Emphasise additional competencies which are marketable and relevant

93. The Working Group also considered other competencies that a Singapore lawyer will require to be future-ready.

1. *Mandatory legal internships (of no less than two weeks)*

94. In view of the need for applied learning, students should be exposed at an early stage to real-world lawyering and to dealing with real-life legal issues, through internships. This is especially given that the practice of law is increasingly multi-disciplinary and cannot be fully conveyed through law modules in school. Experiential learning in this form also allows students to make better informed career decisions about entering the legal profession and if so, their areas of interest. Further, a potential employer may also assess the suitability of an intern as a potential trainee or employee. Even if a student does not eventually enter the legal profession, the internship would have given him the opportunity to acquire some soft skills for work readiness.

95. The purpose of internships should be distinguished from those of: (a) relevant legal training and practice training, which is intended to focus more on imparting and applying practice-specific vocational skills; and (b) the mandatory pro bono requirements that apply to students in the Singapore law schools, which are intended to provide exposure to the Singapore legal system as well as the needs of the community.

(i) *Current state*

96. Internships are currently compulsory in SMU Law and SUSS Law (under a clerkship programme), and can be undertaken in law practices, in-house legal departments or government legal agencies such as the Attorney-General's Chambers. While internships are not mandatory in NUS Law, more than 95% of NUS Law undergraduates undertake at least one internship during their law school education. NUS Law also has clinical education programmes which provide the same exposure to actual real-world cases and include direct supervision from practising lawyers, similar to SMU Law's internship programme and SUSS Law's legal clerkship programme.

(ii) *Why reform is required / gaps identified*

97. As internships are not currently compulsory in NUS Law, there is a small group of students who may complete law school without any practical exposure to lawyering. Such students might be significantly disadvantaged when entering the legal industry, as they would lack exposure to the industry and structured learning opportunities to apply their academic knowledge, regardless of whether they wish to enter legal practice or perform other types of legal work.

(iii) *Recommendations*

98. Legal internships should be made compulsory for all Singapore law school students.¹⁹ Given the value of exposure to different career pathways besides joining a law firm, it is recommended that the various capacities in which a legal internship may be undertaken be expanded beyond traditional law practices or in-house departments in a government or private entity, to include clinical education programmes such as those currently provided by NUS Law. The scope of internships which are permitted can be refined by the Standing Committee in consultation with the law schools and other stakeholders.
99. For the internship to be meaningful, the Working Group recommends that each internship be at least two weeks long with the same organisation.

2. *Institutionalise exposure to public sector legal work*

100. While almost all law graduates are currently exposed to legal practice in the private sector through internships with law practices, far fewer have the opportunity to experience or understand legal work in the public sector, as performed by the Judiciary, the Attorney-General's Chambers and the in-house legal teams of government agencies. Indeed, the Working Group has observed that only a small number of students are exposed to public sector legal work during their time in law school.
101. As these Government organs and entities constitute fundamental components of the overall legal system, it would be desirable for aspiring lawyers to gain an appreciation of the public sector's perspective on issues such as the rule of law and governance in Singapore and to better understand the functioning of the Singapore legal and governance system.

(i) *Current state*

102. SMU Law has a core module, the "Singapore Legal System", which includes a talk by the Ministry of Law's senior management and / or political office holders. SMU Law also organises engagement sessions with guest speakers from the public or judicial service to provide insight into the Singapore legal system. SUSS Law has a compulsory module on "Legal Methods and the Singapore Legal System", which covers different components and institutions involved in the Singaporean legal system. SUSS Law also organises talks by senior law practitioners, judges, and senior government officials and political office holders. NUS Law organises dialogues, such as with the Ministry of Law's

¹⁹ Making internships compulsory has resource implications, as law schools will have to source for internships and track compliance with the requirement. The universities which mandate internships leverage on their existing central career/student activity centres where possible. Relevant public sector agencies should also consider enhancing current internship offerings to absorb the increased number of interns arising from this recommendation.

senior management and/or political office holders for students to better appreciate the policy perspective behind government initiatives.

103. Additionally, all the law schools provide students with the opportunity to experience legal work in the public sector through experiential programmes in public sector agencies such as NUS Law's mandatory pro bono placements and elective clinical placements, SMU Law's mandatory internship and elective State Courts Clerkship Programme and Pro Bono Clinics, and SUSS Law's compulsory clerkship programme. Some students may also take up internships in the public sector.

(ii) *Recommendations*

104. It should be mandatory for law students to have a baseline level of exposure to public sector legal work (such as in the Judiciary, the Attorney-General's Chambers or the legal departments of Ministries and statutory boards). Such exposure should entail gaining an appreciation of the public sector's perspective on the rule of law and governance in Singapore and of how the Singapore legal system works, and an understanding public policy making.

105. Having regard to the resource constraints of these agencies, as well as the limited time in law school, the Working Group recommends the implementation of the following staged approach (with the details to be considered and determined by the Standing Committee in consultation with the law schools and government agencies as necessary):

(a) In the initial phase, such exposure could be institutionalised by way of forums or fireside chats, engagements with senior Government officials, or short "brown bag"-style seminars, on selected topics. To alleviate resource constraints, the law schools could take turns to host such sessions over the course of each year with the sessions made available to all law students across the three law schools.

(b) In the intermediate phase, the law schools could work with the relevant government agencies and/or statutory boards to develop a programme,²⁰ whereby law students would undertake short attachments (of a few days) with selected government agencies and/or statutory boards.

(c) In the longer term, the law schools could explore with the relevant government agencies and/or statutory boards the development of targeted programmes to expose law students to specific areas of public

²⁰ This programme could be similar to the Junior College Law Programme. This is a two-week programme held during the junior college and pre-university holidays, where about 400 students shadow lawyers in law firms and legal organisations to find out more about the legal profession.

sector legal work, such as understanding policymaking. Such programmes may take the form of attachments or courses, depending on the modality that would be the most suitable for achieving the specific aims of each programme.

3. *Multi-disciplinary appreciation and non-law minors*

106. Lawyers often encounter issues pertaining to other disciplines and are required to work with practitioners or experts from those domains. Cross-disciplinary programmes expose law students to students and concepts from other disciplines, allowing them to collaborate and solve multi-disciplinary issues. This will broaden a law student's perspective and provide him with the opportunity to apply his legal training to an unfamiliar discipline, simulating the realities of legal practice.

(i) Current state and why reform is required / gaps identified

107. Currently, inter-disciplinary offerings primarily take the form of: (a) university-wide compulsory subjects, (b) opportunities to take courses that cover adjacent disciplines; and (c) dedicated inter-disciplinary programmes under which students from various faculties work on common projects.²¹

108. Offerings in the form of (a) above bring together students from multiple faculties to study broad subjects of general applicability such as technology or creative thinking. While such modules are useful in exposing law students to a range of non-law related skills and a different community, they provide limited opportunities for students to apply their substantive legal skills and knowledge. Modules that cover adjacent disciplines in the form of (b) may be taught by other faculties or schools or by the law faculty, and may also be open to students in other faculties and departments. Offerings in the form of (c) above, on the other hand, are inherently inter-disciplinary and provide opportunities to work in multi-disciplinary teams. For example, SMU Law has an elective module on "Digital Innovation for Access to Justice" which allows LL.B or JD students to work with Information Systems or Computer Science students to build technology tools with industry partners to improve access to justice. However, most students do not get the opportunity to participate in such modules due to a lack of faculty resources and the limited availability of suitable

²¹ NUS Law offers electives which provide an inter-disciplinary/cross-disciplinary perspective, such as "Behavioural Economics: Law and Regulation" and "Regulation and Political Economy". SMU Law requires its students to take several modules from the inherently interdisciplinary university-wide Core Curriculum, such as "Ethics & Social Responsibility". Additionally, all students must take at least two law-adjacent courses offered by the other faculties. SMU also offers an elective "Digital Innovation for Access to Justice" module where students work in cross-disciplinary teams with industry partners. SUSS Law requires students to take modules in adjacent fields such as psychology and social work, and compulsory "Introduction to Social Services" and "Introduction to Forensics" modules.

opportunities (owing in part to the high pedagogical standards that are demanded of clinical education modules).

109. NUS Law and SMU Law currently allow law undergraduates to pursue minors or specialisation tracks²² in different disciplines when completing their law degree programmes. This is done within the existing LL.B curricular framework, by dedicating the non-law content of the degree programme towards the specialisation or minor.

(ii) *Recommendations*

110. As lawyers will often be required to work with other domain experts, it is recommended that law schools should provide more opportunities for law students to be exposed to other non-law areas²³ by way of existing cross-disciplinary modules or electives, and opportunities to take modules outside the law faculty.

111. Similar to the specialisation and minor offerings of NUS Law and SMU Law, the Working Group recommends that SUSS Law allow interested students to specialise in relevant non-law areas (eg, psychology and social work) by undertaking modules in these areas under formalised specialisation tracks as part of their undergraduate law degree programme.²⁴ Given SUSS Law's more compressed curriculum time (as some of its students are adult learners) this can be introduced within the existing portion of the curriculum already designated for non-law content without diluting the substantive core legal content of the degree programme.

4. *Learning to learn*

112. Introducing programmes and initiatives to enhance students' substantive learning works well in a structured environment (such as within a university), where they are constantly steered and guided.
113. However, in the practice of law, things evolve, new areas emerge and areas of practice will become irrelevant or obsolete. Hence, lawyers must develop the ability to self-learn or learn independently to remain relevant. This skill should be inculcated as early as possible, driven by a sense of curiosity and a desire

²² NUS Law allows students from the AY2021 cohort onwards to declare non-law minors. SMU Law has introduced specialisation "tracks" in 2023 to allow students to take a certain number of non-law modules.

²³ For example, as legal counsel in corporate settings increasingly undertake the role of compliance officers, exposure for interested students to compliance and sustainability-related frameworks may be useful.

²⁴ SUSS Law students are currently allowed to take a certain number of non-law electives in limited relevant non-law areas, which do not lead to accreditation or specialisation.

to learn, and recognising that learning must continue even after leaving formal education and entering the workforce.

(i) *Current state and why reform is required / gaps identified*

114. Recognising that the development of lifelong learning skills must begin from young, MOE has worked with the Autonomous Universities (“AUs”) in Singapore to develop the “LifeSkills Framework”,²⁵ which includes the competencies of “Curiosity and Independent Learning” and “Critical Thinking” that underpin self-learning. The framework sets out the baseline competencies in these skill domains, that all AU students should develop during their university education.

115. The AUs are implementing curricular enhancements and pedagogical policies under the framework for all students, including those in the law schools.²⁶ Moving forward, MOE will work with the AUs to monitor the outcomes of the LifeSkills Framework, through gathering student and employer feedback on the effectiveness of their university education in developing these competencies.

(ii) *Recommendation*

116. The Working Group recommends that the law schools continue to train students’ learning abilities and monitor their development of these competencies, in line with the broader implementation and monitoring efforts for LifeSkills in the AUs. Regular feedback should be obtained from the law schools regarding the effectiveness of the measures implemented, with suggestions on any needed refinements to the initiative.

²⁵ The LifeSkills Framework has been rolled out in the AUs, the polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education from the AY2022 intake. The AU framework and Polytechnic/ITE framework have different baseline competencies, contextualized to their respective student profiles and life stage.

²⁶ The AUs are implementing the LifeSkills Framework through various approaches, including enhancements to the core curriculum which impact students across all faculties. All three law schools develop critical thinking and promote independent learning as integral parts of their pedagogical design. For example, NUS Law adopts the Socratic method and/or self-directed learning for substantive law modules, and has developed a bespoke career tool to help students explore activities for self-development. It also provides opportunities for independent research through its compulsory “Legal Analysis, Research and Communication” module. SMU Law adopts a problem-based pedagogical approach. For instance, its SMU-X and Law Capstone courses are designed to require students to apply their foundational knowledge to real-world problems, which require critical thinking and problem-solving skills. SUSS Law has a compulsory course on “Critical Thinking and Legal Interpretation” and applies the “flipped classroom” approach which requires students to prepare for seminars via self-directed study of online materials beforehand.

E. Duration of law school

117. As noted earlier, the optimal amount of content imparted in law school must be balanced against the need to maintain a reasonable and practical timeframe from matriculation to admission to the profession. The Working Group thus considered whether the current duration of law school should be adjusted to accommodate the extra components recommended.

1. Current state

118. The duration of law school at NUS Law and SMU Law is four years for the LL.B programme, and two or three years for the JD programme. The duration of law school at SUSS Law is four to five years for its LL.B programme and four years for its JD programme.

2. Considerations

119. A longer law school duration would provide more time to accommodate the programmes and/or initiatives recommended. It would also give law students a more rounded legal education as they can pursue electives in other disciplines, attend immersion programmes, and go on secondments to get real world experience.

120. However, increasing the duration of law school may:

- (a) diminish the attractiveness of a local law degree relative to other undergraduate degrees and overseas law school programmes;
- (b) impose opportunity costs on law graduates and delay the supply of lawyers to the legal industry which is already experiencing attrition and manpower shortages; and
- (c) impose further pressures on the limited resources of law schools.

121. Notably, a key potential benefit of lengthening the runway from matriculation to admission to the legal profession, namely, enhancing the provision of practical training, has been addressed by increasing the practice training period from six to 12 months from 2024.

122. Some members of the industry were also in favour of shortening the law undergraduate programme in the Singapore law schools. However, the Working Group considered and decided against recommending this.

123. Shortening the law school programme would dilute the quality of the LL.B law programme offered by the law schools. There are already constraints on curriculum time, and a shorter duration will affect the breadth and depth of electives, after taking into account the core compulsory modules. A law student would also have less time to pursue cross-disciplinary modules and gain

practical experience through attachments and overseas immersion or exchange programmes which are important to preparing for practice. Indeed, MOE's aim is for 70% of Singapore students to participate in overseas exposure programmes, and for 70% of these students (or 49% of all students) to be exposed to ASEAN, China or India, to achieve the national objective of fostering global perspectives among students.

124. Further, a shortened duration would result in the LL.B programme being out of alignment with other honours degree programmes offered by the local universities.

3. *Recommendation*

125. The Working Group recommends that the current duration of law degree programmes be maintained.

F. Concluding observations on formal legal education

126. The Working Group recommends that law schools should continue to develop students with a strong foundation in the law. At the same time, law schools should equip law students with basic necessary skills to start legal practice and help them develop skills for lifelong learning. The Working Group is cognisant that the recommendations pertaining to the first (foundational) phase, if accepted, will impose greater demands on law schools and students. To cater to the demands (within a four-year law course), law schools may need to re-examine if components in the current core curriculum should be tweaked.

G. Standing Committee

127. To enable the effective implementation of the Working Group's recommendations, the Working Group proposes the formation of a Standing Committee (see section VIII from [201] below).
128. Particularly in relation to formal legal education, the Standing Committee would be tasked to:
- (a) oversee, and monitor, the implementation of the compulsory professional ethics and conduct components in the law school curricula;
 - (b) scope the internship requirements for the mandatory internships;
 - (c) oversee and monitor the implementation of the law schools' assessment framework for communication skills, including setting out the list of foundational communication skills and the modalities for teaching and assessing them;
 - (d) oversee and monitor the implementation of the mandatory components on technology and data literacy, and accounting and financial concepts, including the areas of emphasis and the methods of implementation;
 - (e) oversee and monitor the implementation of the mandatory civil law components, including the substantive civil law concepts to be taught and which jurisdictions' laws are most relevant in Singapore's context;
 - (f) oversee the institutionalisation of exposure to public sector legal work;
 - (g) oversee how the law schools can provide more opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning;
 - (h) oversee and monitor the implementation of the skill of independent learning; and
 - (i) oversee the review of the law schools' core curricula and whether and how they should be modified to make space for the recommendations in the Report.

V. SECOND (DEVELOPMENTAL) PHASE – POST-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

A. Objectives

129. The objectives of the second (developmental) phase, of post-university education leading to qualification as a lawyer, should be as follows:
- (a) to develop the practical application of core law subjects and knowledge;
 - (b) to develop the required fundamental skills for a lawyer to begin practice;
and
 - (c) to continue to develop life skills and competencies.

B. Part A Exams and legal training

130. Overseas law graduates comprise approximately one-quarter of each year's cohort of law students entering practice in Singapore. The Part A Exams are compulsory for these graduates and ensure that they meet the baseline level of understanding of Singapore law before they can take the Part B Course alongside the local graduates.

1. Current state

131. As of 2023, the Part A Exams comprise five examinable subjects: Company Law, Criminal Law, Evidence Law, Land Law and the Singapore Legal System. SILE and other providers conduct preparatory courses for the Part A Exams. These courses are not compulsory.

132. Given the recommendations proposed for formal legal education, it is envisaged that there will be gaps in the skills and competencies acquired by graduates returning from overseas law schools. The Part A Course (leading to the Part A Exams) will have to bridge these gaps and ensure that returning overseas graduates have knowledge and skills comparable to those of the local graduates.

2. Recommendations

133. The Working Group recommends that SILE conducts a review of the Part A Exams to align its requirements with local law school curricula following the Working Group's recommendations on formal legal education. Subject to the recommendations of the Ethics Committee, legal professional ethics in Singapore should be a compulsory, assessable component of the Part A Exams. SILE should also review whether the content differences in the Priestly 11 subjects in the Singapore law schools and the overseas law schools which are not currently examinable are sufficiently far apart such that certain essential areas not covered by the overseas law schools should be assessable under the Part A Exams.

134. The Working Group also recommends that components of communication skills, accounting and financial concepts, technology and data literacy, and civil law be assessable in the Part A Exams. This can be done by including relevant issues or questions that require a baseline familiarity with these components within the existing examined subjects, on par with the expectation for law graduates from the Singapore law schools.

135. Additionally, if the recommendation to institutionalise exposure to public sector legal work is adopted for law students in the local law schools, returning overseas law graduates (who might have even less exposure to the Singapore

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legal system and rule of law) should be encouraged to attend the activities recommended at [105] above for the local law students.

C. Part B Exams and practice training period

136. The Working Group's mandate to review the post-university legal education came after the review of the Committee for the Professional Training of Lawyers ("CPTL"), whose recommendations will take effect from 2024.
137. The CPTL was set up in 2016 to conduct a root-and-branch review of the professional training regime (specifically Part B and practice training) and how it might be modified to raise the quality and consistency of training standards across law practices. The CPTL was not mandated to review other aspects of formal legal education, including law school education and the Part A Course/Exams.
138. The review of Part B and practice training has been addressed by three structural recommendations and 17 specific recommendations from the CPTL. The CPTL recommendations are being implemented progressively, with the new regime coming into force from the 2024 Part B session. A summary of the CPTL's recommendations is at **Annex F**.
139. In particular, the Part B Course curriculum will be revised to equip candidates with broad knowledge of Singapore law and legal practice. The revised Part B Curriculum will comprise six modules, all compulsory (as set out in the table below). The Working Group recommends that the CPTL recommendations should take their course before a further substantive review on their effectiveness is conducted. However, some recommendations in the Report, such as adjustments to the curricula of law schools, if accepted, would inevitably affect the content of some modules of the Part B Course, and should be taken into consideration as the content of the Part B Course is developed. As such, the Working Group recommends the incorporation of various elements (arising from the recommended changes to the law school curricula) into the following corresponding Part B Course modules.

Corporate and Commercial Practice	May include an assessment of practical application of accounting and financial concepts
Dispute Resolution Practice	
Private Client Practice	
Ethics and Professional Responsibility	
Contemporary Legal Practice	May assess the ability to use technology and understand data in practice
Professional skills	A focus on legal drafting (of court documents and contracts for example) can be emphasised here

140. Whilst formal legal education focuses on building a foundation of a broad range of substantive law with complementary skills, Part B is designed to prepare candidates for entry into the legal workforce. The stringency of the Part B Exams will be raised, to maintain the expected quality of newly qualified lawyers. In this regard, the Part B Course is viewed as a key part of the continuum of legal education. Efforts should therefore be made to prevent repetition and eliminate unnecessary overlaps with the other components of legal education, to free up more time for the teaching of content that would be useful for practice.

VI. THIRD (ENHANCEMENT) PHASE – CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

A. Objectives

141. The objectives of continuing legal education (“CLE”) are:
- (a) to develop and cultivate in-depth domain expertise or to broaden expertise;
 - (b) to hone required fundamental competencies for a lawyer; and
 - (c) to hone professional competencies.
142. Being a newly qualified AAS is just the beginning. Most of a lawyer’s learning is lifelong and occurs during the practice of the law. Continuing education and learning are thus of paramount importance, particularly in an evolving environment where lawyers have to keep abreast of legal developments and the operating environment to continue to provide value-added, relevant legal services. The importance of CLE applies to all lawyers irrespective of seniority.
143. Hence, the Working Group broadly recommends the following three initiatives:
- (a) Introducing a legal sector competency framework to provide strategic direction on competencies envisaged to be necessary for lawyers at different stages of their professional career. The framework will be complemented by training roadmaps.
 - (b) Refreshing the current CPD system, to focus on upskilling and achieving the identified competencies. In particular, the CPD requirements should be harmonised to 16 points for all practising lawyers.
 - (c) Introducing structured training programmes for young lawyers, based on competencies to be identified as most critical for their development in the early phase of their career.

B. Introducing competency framework and training roadmaps

144. An effective competency framework serves to communicate the areas of demand for lawyers to focus their upskilling, while directing the efforts of training providers to develop relevant and quality programmes to meet the demands. This should result in more deliberate or targeted competency upgrading outcomes for lawyers. This framework can be constantly updated to be aligned with industry needs and national imperatives.
145. With the expanded breadth of knowledge expected of lawyers and the increasing need for lawyers to operate in and lead high-functioning, multi-disciplinary teams, it is also opportune to consider some refinements to the CLE system so that the full benefits of a competency framework may be realised.

1. Current state

146. There is no nationally recognised competency framework for the legal sector to guide lawyers. While SAL has developed the Legal Industry Framework for Training and Education (“LIFTED”) to assist lawyers in identifying the competencies corresponding to different seniority levels, which are then used to identify relevant courses to address the identified needs, it has not yet been introduced to the profession for adoption.

2. Why reform is required / gaps identified

147. Under the current CPD scheme, programmes featuring non-law topics (such as financial literacy, management skills and information technology) can already be accredited. However, most of the accredited activities available tend to be focused on substantive law content.
148. As CPD requirements are largely self-directed, there is a risk that lawyers may not sufficiently develop competencies relevant to their profession or practice area or keep up to date with emerging areas of importance. Lawyers may also not be familiar with how best to develop the ideal competencies relevant to their practice, given the disparate number and types of accredited courses or activities available. It is important that lawyers should not participate in courses or activities merely to fulfil the CPD requirements without considering the usefulness of that course or activity to their practice or professional development.

3. Recommendations

149. It is recommended that a universal legal sector competency framework be introduced to provide strategic direction and guidance to facilitate competency and talent development. The competency framework will be complemented by

- a proposed training roadmap to assist lawyers in identifying relevant and suitable training programmes for their particular career stage and aspirations.
150. In this regard, SAL will be introducing LIFTED as a competency framework for the legal profession. The Working Group recommends that LIFTED be adapted, and subsequently modified and built on with consultation from stakeholders and continued work to align the framework with SkillsFuture Singapore's skills taxonomy, to provide synergy with the national competency framework.
151. The framework should set out the specific competencies (and therefore skills and knowledge) expected of lawyers based on specific stages of PQE, eg, PQE of less than five years, five to 15 years, and above 15 years and, where possible, with correlation to job roles (eg, junior associate, senior associate or partner for legal practitioners; or legal counsel, senior legal counsel or general counsel for in-house counsel). It is further envisaged that for each stage, the framework will comprise two broad categories of competencies which lawyers should seek to acquire or further develop, namely: (a) practice competencies (eg, in substantive law or technical areas); and (b) general competencies (or functional skills). Overlaying this, professional ethics and conduct standards should be a required competency at every stage.
152. Practice competencies are competencies closely related to legal practice. This may include keeping abreast of best practices or practice tools, deepening knowledge in core areas or learning about developments in new areas of law. Lawyers would typically be motivated to hone practice competencies to add to or deepen their legal knowledge to better serve clients, and so that they can keep up to date with professional obligations and regulations governing professional conduct to avoid falling afoul of them.
153. General competencies are essential life skills which any individual professional should ideally possess,²⁷ albeit customised for legal practice.
154. A non-exhaustive list of areas of knowledge or skill which fall under each of the competencies for lawyers would include the following:

²⁷ These skills are set out in existing frameworks, such as SSG's Critical Core Skills which comprise a set of competencies assessed to be transferable skills that enable individuals to be employable and facilitate career mobility. These include creative thinking, building inclusivity, customer orientation, adaptability and global perspective.

Practice competencies	General competencies	Professional ethics and conduct standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal research• Anti-Money Laundering/ Countering the Financing of Terrorism/Proliferation Financing (“AML/CFT/PF”)• Areas of substantive law• Legal Practice Management Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative thinking• Communication skills• Data literacy and computer skills• Usage of legal technology• Financial literacy• Management and human resource skills• Language courses• Leadership/people management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Conduct Rules requirements• AML/CFT/PF requirements

155. The framework can be tailored to address the needs of specific practice area(s) of a lawyer, such as dispute resolution, corporate law, building and construction, data and digital economy law, admiralty law, corporate insolvency law, family law, criminal law, and areas of compliance and sustainability.
156. The framework should be regularly reviewed and updated to deal with new practice areas, knowledge or skills which a lawyer might be expected to acquire.
157. In the above regard, the Working Group recommends that the Standing Committee (see section VIII at [201] below):
 - (a) oversee the introduction of the competency framework and its implementation, together with a training roadmap of specific courses or programmes for lawyers within each competency, and tailored to specific PQE phases (with correlation to job roles where possible); and
 - (b) engage industry and other stakeholders to ensure that the job roles and competencies identified within the framework are consistently reflective of the industry’s needs and national strategic priorities, taking into account the feedback and recommendations provided by the Law Society to the Working Group.

C. Refreshing the CPD system

158. Any reforms to the CLE phase should ensure that a lawyer remains relevant and competent throughout his career. CLE should be an opportunity for retooling and learning future-ready skills for all lawyers regardless of their years of experience. Hence, the CPD system should be designed to encourage lawyers to focus on learning and improving their skills as their primary aim in undergoing CPD courses, instead of focusing on accumulating CPD points.

1. Current state

159. Under the existing CPD framework, administered by SILE, lawyers must fulfil a stipulated number of CPD points a year, to renew their PCs.²⁸ Broadly, one CPD point is in most cases equivalent to one hour of learning. The number of CPD points that lawyers are required to obtain annually depends on their seniority, as follows:

- (a) practitioners with less than five years' PQE – 16 points annually;
- (b) practitioners with five to 15 years' PQE – 8 points annually;
- (c) practitioners with more than 15 years' PQE – 4 points annually.

160. CPD requirements can be fulfilled by participating in CPD accredited activities, offered by universities, entities such as the SAL and Law Society, and private training providers. Lawyers may also satisfy CPD requirements through teaching (eg, by giving lectures in their area of specialty or conducting other training courses), which earns them triple the number of CPD points per hour to recognise the time and effort spent on research and preparation. Up to half of the CPD requirements may also be satisfied through attending in-house seminars, attending non-accredited activities (including on non-law topics such as IT literacy, financial literacy, office management and presentation skills), writing law-related publications (where points are earned based on the length of the publication) and watching online videos, among other activities.

161. There is currently no structured curriculum or mandatory categories of activities under the CPD scheme, and lawyers may fulfil their CPD requirements with a combination of the above activities.

2. Why reform is required / gaps identified

162. Under the current CPD scheme, lawyers with more PQE are required to obtain fewer CPD points each year. This is underpinned by the premise that lawyers

²⁸ For completeness, it is noted that the Legal Profession (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2012 apply CPD requirements to foreign practitioners who are registered under section 36B of the Legal Profession Act 1966. For the purposes of the Report, the CPD requirements applicable to these individuals will not be considered by the Working Group.

require less training as they accumulate more practice experience. This premise may no longer hold as new frontiers emerge and the practice of law must keep pace with technology and other developments. Further, lawyers regardless of PQE level may satisfy their CPD requirements through teaching, without having to attend any training.

163. A review of other jurisdictions with similar CLE requirements for lawyers shows that many jurisdictions impose standard requirements across the board regardless of seniority. This is also the case in other professions in Singapore. For example, all chartered accountants are required to complete 120 hours of training every three years, including at least six verifiable hours of ethics training. Doctors are required to attain 50 Continuing Medical Education (“CME”) points every two years irrespective of seniority, while those who specialise are required to attain a certain number of points pertaining to that specialisation. A comparison of Singapore’s CPD requirements for lawyers with those of other professions in Singapore, as well as with other jurisdictions, is at **Annex G**.

3. Recommendations

164. To upskill Singapore lawyers to meet the national vision for the legal industry, it is recommended that the training requirements for all categories of lawyers be eventually harmonized to a 16-point requirement. There is no longer as cogent a reason for having differentiated treatment based on PQE phases (or seniority) as learning is lifelong. The 16-point requirement takes into account the amount of training necessary for lawyers to meet their competency requirements at each stage and would ensure a more even and structured approach to raising the legal sector’s skills and competencies.
165. In tandem with the harmonisation of CPD points, the content of CPD should be focused on acquiring competencies which are required at each PQE stage (and with correlation to job roles where possible), and which are critical for a lawyer of the future and to achieve the vision for the legal industry. An indicative mapping of some practice and general competencies, which are identified to be useful or relevant at the various stages of a lawyer’s career and which should be regularly reviewed to ensure relevance, is as follows:

PQE	Practice competencies	General competencies
Junior <5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and written advocacy, including drafting of court documents and advice • Legal research • Ethics and professional conduct • AML/CFT/PF obligations and compliance • Contract drafting, including for cross-border transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional written communications • Personal leadership and influence • Leading without authority • Conflict management
Middle 5 - 15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice management • Updates to substantive law • Expansion to other aspects of law (eg, civil law) • Appellate advocacy • Mediation • Further studies and accreditations (eg, mediator certification, arbitration fellowship) • Ethics and professional conduct • AML/CFT/PF obligations and compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People development • Global skills (eg, business development, languages) • Use of legal technology such as workplace productivity software tools and secure collaboration platforms • Performance coaching • Establishment of professional networks
Senior >15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy in international courts • Updates to substantive law • Ethics and professional conduct • AML/CFT/PF obligations and compliance • Cross border transactions • Deals architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and mentorship • Global skills (eg, business development, languages) • Legal technology tools and usage • Leadership and people management • Enterprise risk management • Strategic thinking and planning

166. The need to upskill does not diminish with seniority. Moreover, different skills are required as a lawyer progresses in seniority, and lawyers should keep abreast of new legal or other developments relevant to the profession to remain relevant and competitive in the legal industry. That said, the CPD framework should continue to reward teaching and giving back to the legal industry, in areas that are aligned to the competency framework.

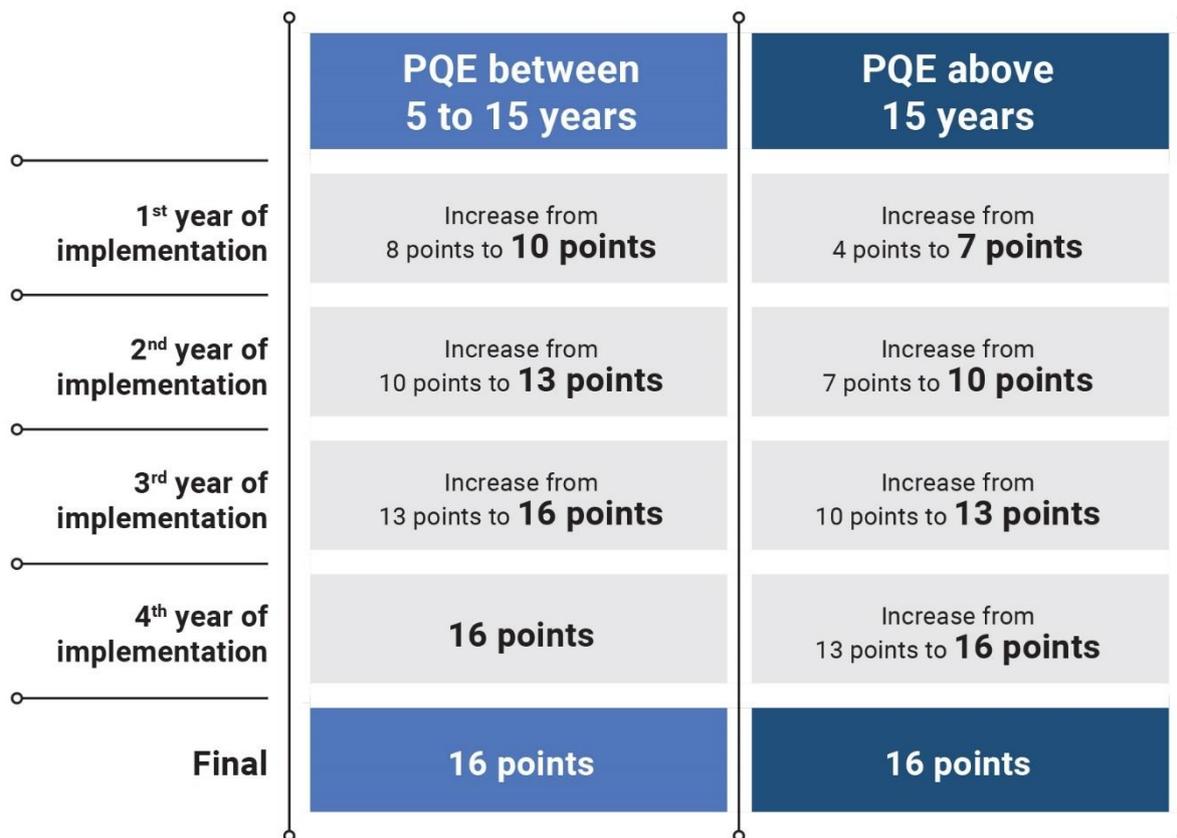
167. Hence, it is recommended that:

- (a) The policy of awarding additional points for teaching be maintained but adjusted to award double points for lawyers who teach. The efforts and contributions by lawyers in providing quality training should continue to be recognised.
- (b) The ability to earn all requisite CPD points for each year by teaching be maintained for lawyers with PQE of above 15 years, but subject to subparagraph (d) below.

- (c) For lawyers with PQE of up to 15 years, a maximum of 50% of the requisite CPD points can be acquired by teaching.
- (d) As the Singapore legal profession must remain a trusted profession, all lawyers (regardless of PQE) must undertake modules relating to professional ethics and regulatory matters (including AML/CFT/PF obligations). The particulars of these components will be subject to the further recommendations of the Ethics Committee.

These proposals would encourage lawyers (particularly in the senior category) to continue to teach and provide a steady resource of trainers that will be required if the competency framework and training roadmaps are implemented, creating a virtuous cycle of senior practitioners imparting their knowledge to younger members of the profession. At the same time, for young lawyers, the emphasis should be to acquire skills and competencies at the early stage of their legal career.

- 168. In recognition of the inflexibility that an annual CPD requirement may impose on lawyers who may wish to consider more robust and substantive upskilling programmes, it is also recommended that SILE consider how a “stacking” system can be implemented to allow practitioners to complete their CPD obligations over a certain number of years (eg. 48 points over three years) for programmes that are longer and/or more intensive, such as graduate diploma courses or audit courses offered by the law schools. This system would be similar to the requirements for accountants’ continuing education. To discourage practitioners from delaying the completion of their CPD requirements until the tail end of the three-year period, the option to stack can be made available only where lawyers are participating in a suitably substantive and lengthy programme that is aligned with the competency framework. The Working Group notes that the current CPD requirements are tied to the annual PC renewal, and further review is needed to assess how the stacking system can be implemented.
- 169. As there will be a substantive impact to the middle and senior levels of the profession by an increase of the CPD requirements, the Working Group recommends a phased increase of the CPD points as follows:



170. The Working Group recommends a phased approach for the following reasons:

- (a) Training providers will require sufficient time to calibrate their programmes and scale up (eg, to prepare programme materials tailored or based on the competency framework and training roadmap, and to obtain resources such as manpower to provide more training in view of the increased CPD requirements). Otherwise, there might be insufficient course placements available for all lawyers to fulfil their revised CPD requirements.
- (b) Smaller law firms/practices may not have the requisite resources if their lawyers are suddenly required to commit more time to fulfil the CPD requirements.

171. An immediate and practical result of having to fulfil more training hours is the increased amount of time and financial resources required to undergo training. For lawyers, the time spent on attending training may be an opportunity cost in terms of potential billable hours. CPD-accredited courses generally attract fees, with approximately 56% of courses in CPD Year 2022 costing \$200 and below, and about 17% of the options being offered free of charge. In this regard, the Working Group recommends that the relevant agencies explore how to keep the costs of training affordable so that it will not be a barrier to upskilling. Agencies should also consider providing online modes of training so that it will be easier for lawyers to attend the courses.

D. Milestone cohort retooling for newly qualified lawyers

1. Current state and why reform is required

172. Newly qualified lawyers are often challenged by the demands of practice when they first join the profession. They might also be unsure as to what training would be effective to assist them in their work. Coupled with the flexibility that is accorded by the CPD system in allowing lawyers to source for courses themselves, with no specific requirements on the types of CPD courses that can be taken at any PQE stage, this may result in hugely varying levels of training and focus.

173. As newly qualified lawyers require significant further vocational training in their formative years of practice, it is critical for these lawyers to be targeted and purposeful in their development. A systematic approach should be adopted to guide younger lawyers towards achieving the necessary competencies for practice.

2. Recommendations

174. As there is a need to ensure that practical competencies are adequately developed at the early stage of a lawyer's career, it is recommended that SILE, the Law Society and SAL work together to introduce milestone training programmes for newly qualified lawyers within the first five years of practice. The programmes should be curated based on the competencies identified as critical for a new lawyer's development and can be implemented as a mandatory or voluntary cohort-wide requirement. At the start of a lawyer's career, emphasis should be placed on crucial foundational areas of professional obligations such as ethics and AML/CFT/PF (which will apply throughout the span of a lawyer's career) and vocational skills such as written and oral advocacy. These training programmes should also focus on equipping junior lawyers with the skills necessary for a future-ready practice, such as in cross-disciplinary thinking and collaboration, problem solving, and technology-enabled practice. It is recommended that completion of such a milestone training programme (if implemented) would fulfil a lawyer's CPD requirements for that year.

175. It is noted that SAL will be introducing a structured certification programme for junior lawyers to upskill in stages across their first five years of practice on a voluntary basis. The certification programme will be a milestone training programme for its participants and will also prepare them for eventual specialization as disputes or corporate lawyers, as well as for specialist practice areas such as building and construction, maritime and shipping, and data and digital economy. This provides a continuum of qualifications commencing with certification and which are stackable towards SAL's specialist accreditation.

176. The Working Group recommends that the structured milestone programme be developed within the Standing Committee, with input from the law schools, stakeholders and industry for continuity and synergies with law school curricula.

VII. ALLIED LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

177. ALPs refer to non-lawyer legal professionals who are employed in the legal sector. These include paralegals, legal executives and, more recently, newer roles such as legal project managers and legal technologists. ALPs are envisaged to play an increasing role in law firms' operations in the future. There is a need to develop a competent corps of ALPs to complement lawyers in the legal workforce.

A. Current state

178. Most law firms are organised as a pyramid – with many junior associates and support staff forming the base of the firm, senior associates in the middle, and a few partners at the top. Legal support staff such as paralegals support lawyers, by performing legal research, and preparing and filing standard form documents and correspondence. In smaller law practices and in-house legal departments, paralegals may double up as administrative staff. The functions of paralegals are largely repetitive. Over time, paralegals develop specialist knowledge to support their various functions.

179. Under the Legal Profession Act 1966, paralegals in Singapore who are not admitted to practise law are strictly limited in the legal services they can provide on their own account. This limits the progression of paralegals. Some paralegals leave their roles to pursue a legal qualification to become a lawyer.

180. The only Pre-Employment Training (“PET”) law diploma available in Singapore is offered by Temasek Polytechnic (“TP”). The Diploma in Law and Management imparts foundational theoretical and procedural law knowledge, along with other business-relevant skills such as communication, marketing and business analytics. TP also offers a Diploma in Legal Executive Studies for adult learners. This programme allows mid-career adults to transit into the legal industry, and also allows existing paralegals and legal executives who have not undergone any formal training to acquire relevant skills and knowledge for their roles. All the subjects in this diploma are offered as separate and distinct modules, to allow adult learners to upgrade in selected areas if they wish. These diplomas are not pre-requisites to taking on a paralegal role within law firms – many paralegals hold law degrees or non-law qualifications.

181. With the rise of legal technology, the role of paralegals is evolving. Paralegals are expected to keep up with new technology and take on expanded functions to stay competitive. The chart below projects the demand for paralegals vis-à-vis more specialised roles in law practices in Singapore. As such, it would be beneficial for paralegals to develop specialised skills to meet the needs of the industry and remain in demand. While it is projected that the demand for specialised roles (*ie*, Legal project managers, legal technology advisors and

legal data analysts) will grow at a much faster pace than the paralegal role, the absolute demand is likely to be modest in the initial phases.

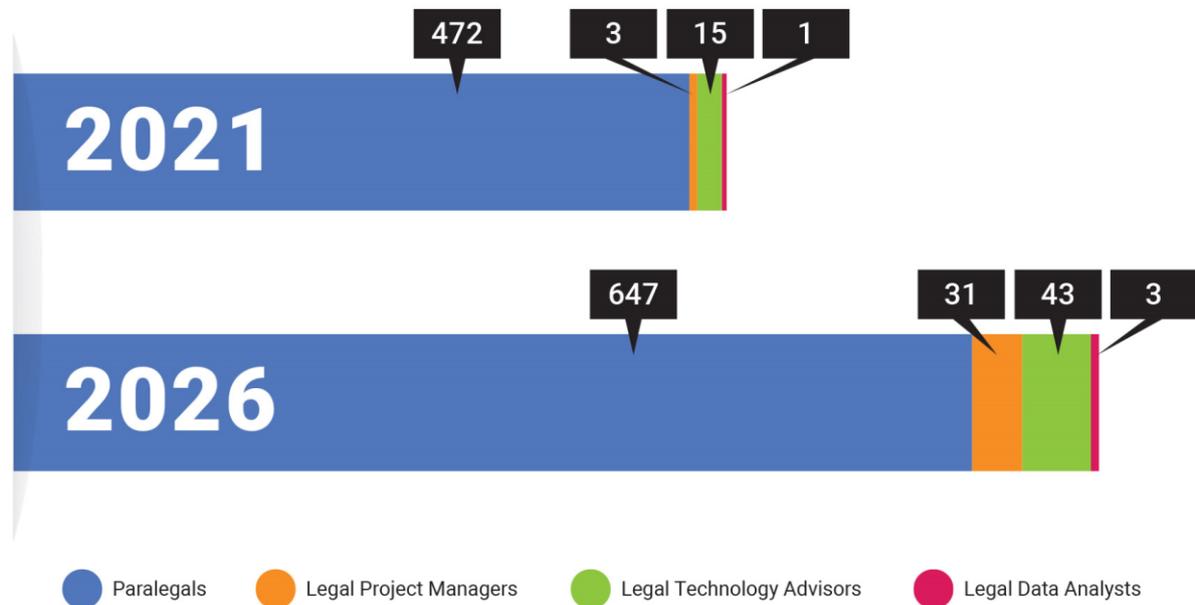


Chart: Projected Demand for Allied Legal Professionals by Year 2026 (Source: MinLaw's Survey of Law Firms)

182. In response to the growing need for training in legal technology, TP has developed the “Legal Technology in Practice” certification course (incorporating Certification by SAL and ICDL Asia (a computer skills certification provider) for Basic Legal Technology Competency) for paralegals to enhance their legal technology competencies, and to fill new legal roles such as legal technology managers and legal project managers.

B. Why reform is required / gaps identified

183. Paralegals are typically viewed as support staff, and the time spent by paralegals in supporting cases is generally not billable. Law firms shared that while contributions of the legal support staff including paralegals are valuable, the firms face cost pressures and have started exploring options to better manage their costs. These include setting up operation hubs staffed with legal support staff at lower-cost locations to support voluminous work and redistributing the work amongst a smaller team of support staff. Most firms also reported a higher lawyer-to-legal support staff ratio than before; and some legal support staff support whole practice groups rather than individual lawyers. In some law firms, paralegals have been deployed to focus on specific functional areas such as debt recovery or e-discovery or to take on roles such as technology coordinators for their teams.
184. In addition, due to the limited regulatory scope of legal services which paralegals (and non-lawyers) can currently provide, career progression for paralegals tends to be limited. Coupled with the increasing ability of technological solutions to automate or displace straightforward legal tasks, the scope of work for paralegals has been eroded, which in turn threatens to render their current role obsolete.
185. Based on the Polytechnic Graduate Employment Survey between the years 2017 and 2020, about two in 10 Law and Management diploma graduates from TP took up a full-time permanent job related to their diploma right after graduation, including roles such as paralegals. Seven out of 10 pursued further studies immediately after graduation, including those working concurrently. Among those who joined the industry as paralegals or legal executives, about eight in 10 had indicated their intention to leave their firms within five years of graduation to pursue further studies such as a law degree.
186. Against the backdrop of the trends affecting the legal industry set out earlier in the Report, particularly those relating to technology and manpower, the status quo is unsustainable in the medium to long term. As with the imperatives facing lawyers, familiarity with technology (both substantively and in terms of legal technology tools) is critical for ALPs to avoid obsolescence and to enhance their value proposition to law practices through specialisation.
187. At the same time, there is a need to prepare our limited talent pool to support emerging roles such as those of legal project managers and legal technologists. Whilst the demand for these roles is not well defined, there is an opportunity to redesign existing paralegal roles to pivot them into the newer ALP archetypes. This would ameliorate some of the risk of a hollowing out of the role of ALPs in the legal industry due to the erosion of more straightforward legal tasks by

technological advances, and potentially create new jobs which are adapted to the technological changes.²⁹

188. The Working Group has therefore assessed that there are three broad issues to be addressed as follows:



²⁹ Lavelle, Maeve, "The Long and Short of It: How Legal Education Can Help Solve the Profession's Identity Crisis", *Technology, Innovation and Access to Justice: Dialogues on the Future of Law*, Edinburg University Press, 2021, at pp. 267 to 281.

C. Recommendations

189. To tackle these issues holistically, the Working Group's recommendations are three-fold:
- (a) provide adequate training and opportunities for ALPs to develop specialisations or take on specialised roles;
 - (b) for law schools to consider how ALPs' prior learning and/or work experience can be recognised through credit exemptions in law school and
 - (c) review the regulatory framework for ALPs, including a medium-to-long term study on enhancing the scope of work that ALPs can do, including providing legal services.

1. *Modularised, stackable certification programmes*

190. TP's Diploma in Law and Management provides a useful foundation for aspiring non-lawyer legal professionals.
191. TP has started to incorporate elements of technology and multi-disciplinary approaches within its curriculum. It is recommended that this be taken further through the introduction of modularised, stackable certification programmes in new areas such as legal technology, project management, regulatory compliance,³⁰ sustainability-related standards, data analytics, and functional areas such as e-discovery to allow diploma graduates to continue their professional development in these relevant areas and be accredited in these functional specialisations. These programmes should be developed by TP in collaboration with relevant organisations (eg, SAL, SCCA and ICDL-Asia) and industry partners to ensure industry relevance and recognition.
192. Similarly, the legal sector competency roadmap should take into account the skills and competencies that would continue to add value to the roles of ALPs. Training providers of continuing legal education should be encouraged to design suitable training programmes that are industry-recognised and provide opportunities for career progression to graduates from TP's Diploma programme as well as existing paralegals and legal executives. This would in turn create new pathways for ALPs other than the conventional route of joining a law practice only to then pursue further studies to qualify as a practising lawyer.

³⁰ For example, TP already offers a Specialist Diploma on Corporate Secretarial Practice which is targeted at both fresh graduates and working adults and is curated in collaboration with the Chartered Secretaries Institute of Singapore. Nanyang Polytechnic also offers a separate course on Fund Management. TP may wish to leverage on these courses for the purpose of the present recommendation.

193. However, the success of any scheme (to introduce stackable relevant programmes) is largely dependent on law practices changing their mindset to treat ALPs as adding value to a lawyer's work and not merely as manpower for lower value-added work. In particular, law practices should consider how ALPs who are trained accordingly could be deployed to harness technology to support lawyers in research and operational needs, as has been observed in larger global law practices³¹.

2. *Recognition of ALPs' prior learning and work experience to facilitate progression to law school*

194. In line with the above and the observed trend that ALPs have tended to pursue further education to be admitted to legal practice, it is recommended that ALPs who have attained relevant work experience and endorsement from their employers be given credit exemptions towards certain components of law school to facilitate their progress towards admission to legal practice.

195. This would incentivise ALPs to stay in their roles to garner the necessary skills to qualify for credits and reduce the opportunity cost of time taken by further studies for mid-career professionals in particular.

196. The Working Group recommends that the way in which this credit exemption can be given should be worked out by the law schools, including how to assess ALPs prior learning and work experience as well as which courses/modules ALPs can be exempted from. These plans can be shared with the Standing Committee to ensure consistency across the law schools. The scheme should not lower the bar for entrance to the law schools' programmes nor dilute the substantive law content thereof.

3. *Review the enhancement of ALPs' role*

197. Separately, a review should be conducted to consider how an ALP's role can be reshaped in the medium to long term, with the possibility of allowing them to take on more value-added work, including certain areas of legal work. This could include a review of the regulatory restrictions preventing paralegals from providing any legal services, and relatedly the prohibition against the time costs of an ALP being "billable" or factored into cost orders irrespective of their contribution to a case. With regard to the latter, a change in approach, with the necessary legislative amendments, may be considered to permit a law practice to charge out and claim for an ALP's time cost to enhance the ALP's value to the law practice and reduce the perception that ALPs are merely cost centres.

³¹ For example, international legal firms such as Clifford Chance and Linklaters have issued job descriptions for the hiring of 'Legal Technology Advisors', while Allen & Overy has issued one for a 'Legal Technology Engagement Senior Manager'.

198. In this regard, it may be useful to consider the approaches taken in other jurisdictions. In Ontario (Canada), Washington (USA) and Japan,³² ALPs or their equivalent are regulated and licensed. This generally involves the completion of a qualifying exam. These licensed ALPs are given limited rights of practice that overlap with the privileges accorded to lawyers in those jurisdictions. In Ontario, licensed paralegals may represent clients in certain matters such as provincial offences and small claims. In Japan, judicial scriveners are authorised to represent clients in summary courts as well as real estate conveyancing matters. Whilst the contexts in which these frameworks operate differ from Singapore's, further studies may be done to consider if any of these approaches may be adopted in our legal system.
199. Notably, within the public sector, there are existing schemes for non-lawyers to provide certain legal services, such as the Specialised Legal Executive Scheme in the Legal Aid Bureau, and "gazetted" public service officers such as police prosecutors. While these schemes operate in comparatively controlled settings, they provide useful learning points on the possible roles that non-lawyers may eventually take on.
200. The Working Group recommends that further study and consultations be conducted to consider how the role of ALPs might be expanded to allow them to perform some legal work, and if so, how and to what extent. The Working Group notes the following considerations:
- (a) the impact of any such change on the availability of work for current lawyers, particularly if technology will further erode the "bread-and-butter" work of lawyers;
 - (b) whether there will be sufficient demand for such limited legal roles to be performed by ALPs; and
 - (c) the impact this may potentially have on the standard of legal services in Singapore, in view of the stringent education and training requirements imposed on lawyers.

³² In Japan, judicial scriveners perform the functions traditionally performed by paralegals in other jurisdictions.

VIII. STANDING COMMITTEE

201. To effectively implement the recommendations of the Working Group, a Standing Committee should be formed to oversee the follow-up from the Report.

A. Current state

202. In 2020, SMU Law established a Practice Advisory Panel of about 50 practitioners to advise on curriculum review proposals. Similarly, NUS and SUSS have an Advisory Council and Advisory Committee respectively, which include members from the industry to provide input to the curricula from the employers' perspective. The law schools currently administer and convene their own respective industry consultation committees for these curriculum or module reviews. Continuing to use such platforms as touchpoints with the industry to gain insight and guidance on curricula planning will help law schools achieve closer alignment between what is taught and what is required in the market.

203. However, this is done at the level of the individual universities, and there is no national-level coordination with the other universities nor with the other stakeholders in the legal education ecosystem.

204. At the same time, SILE separately confers with law schools and other stakeholders through its Board to review its curricula.

B. Recommendations

205. The ecosystem will benefit from stronger alignment in the thought leadership and process for achieving Singapore's vision for the legal industry. This alignment must span across all stakeholders involved in formal and continuing legal education (eg, the Singapore law schools, SILE, Law Society, SAL and relevant Government agencies).

206. In the current landscape, there is no single coordinating body with oversight of all the changes being instituted or considered at any given time. Stakeholders set up their own platforms to deal with matters directly under their charge. The existing limited coordination can result in potential duplication on the one hand, and yet be insufficiently nimble to respond as a system to changes in the operating context on the other.

207. The Working Group thus recommends that a Standing Committee be set up as a coordinating body to: (a) oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group; and (b) continue taking in feedback and providing general direction to stakeholders in legal education to ensure that the training and development of law students and lawyers meet the needs

of the profession.³³ The Standing Committee will regularly discuss with relevant government agencies the latest competencies, developments and training needed for the legal industry.

208. The composition of the Standing Committee should include representation from the stakeholders in the legal system and profession, including the law schools, Temasek Polytechnic, SILE, Law Society, SAL, SCCA, industry representatives and the Judiciary and other government agencies. The Standing Committee will advise on the needs of the sector and on the requirements to fulfil the needs.
209. For the Standing Committee to be effective in its advisory and guiding role, the various stakeholders should be prepared to support and implement its recommendations as the baseline for further refinement. The terms of reference for the Standing Committee (or any sub-committees thereunder) can make this clear. The Standing Committee should also work in tandem with existing industry advisory committees set up by the law schools to ensure that their efforts are not duplicative. The Standing Committee should advise the law schools on the overall direction of their curricula, and the industry advisory committees can be consulted on the details of the implementation of any changes.
210. The terms of reference of the Standing Committee could include the following:
 - (a) To implement the recommendations of the Working Group (including setting out the details of implementation) relating to formal legal education (at [128] above), CLE (at [157] and [176] above) and ALPs.
 - (b) To consider, on an on-going basis, the curricula of the law schools and of SILE's Bar Examinations to ensure that they continue to be relevant and meet the current and anticipated needs of the industry. This includes reviewing the core curriculum and proposing changes to introduce new elements or remove less relevant components.
 - (c) To act as a conduit to obtain feedback from the legal profession and the industry to distil emerging areas and the future of the profession, and the necessary skills required of lawyers to support the industry; and consider how legal education can support all of these. This could include a mechanism for obtaining international feedback and learning from other jurisdictions' best practices.

³³ This is akin to the Ministry of Health's Medical Students Training Standing Committee, which oversees the development and implementation of training standards and reviews the medical clinical training curriculum to meet the country's healthcare needs.

- (d) To consider, on an on-going basis (with guidance from the Steering Committee and at a strategic level), the direction of the legal profession, and to plan its efforts and resources in legal education accordingly.

IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS

211. The recommendations are designed to address the most pressing needs at the time the Working Group discussions took place. However, the needs of and pressures on the profession are constantly shifting. Hence, any recommendations made today may have to be refined with changing circumstances.
212. To keep up with the constant changes to the legal landscape and to achieve the vision for the legal profession, the Working Group notes the following:
- (a) All stakeholders have a role to play and, where possible, by co-ordinated effort.
 - (b) Regular reviews of the whole legal education landscape (law school curricula, Part A and Part B courses and CLE) are important.
 - (c) Even with proper guidance, tools and resources to help lawyers succeed, lawyers must ultimately take ownership of their own learning and development.
213. The Working Group is cognisant that many of the recommendations bring significant changes to the landscape. However, the recommendations are made in the hope that current and future generations of lawyers will be placed in a better stead to lead Singapore's drive to be a global legal hub. The Working Group therefore calls for a co-ordinated effort from all stakeholders in the industry to support the various initiatives recommended, with the assurance that their views will be heard and considered through the Standing Committee.

X. ANNEXES

A. Annex A – Members of the Steering Committee

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon	Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Singapore
Mr K Shanmugam, SC	Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law
Mr Chan Chun Sing	Minister for Education and Minister-in-Charge of the Public Service
Mr Edwin Tong, SC	Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law
Mr Lucien Wong, SC	Attorney-General, Attorney-General's Chambers
Professor S Jayakumar	Senior Legal Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

B. Annex B – Members of the Working Group and Sub-Working Groups

Working Group on the Reform of Legal Education

Co-Chairpersons:

Justice Audrey Lim	Judge, Supreme Court of Singapore
Mr Luke Goh	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Law

Members:

Mr Lionel Yee, SC	Deputy Attorney-General, Attorney-General's Chambers
Mr Calvin Phua	Deputy Secretary (Policy), Ministry of Law
Ms Chong Yiun Lin	Deputy Secretary (Higher Education and Skills), Ministry of Education
Associate Professor Wong Siew Yin, Eleanor	Dean, Singapore Institute of Legal Education
Professor Andrew Simester	Dean, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore
Professor Lee Pey Woan	Dean, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University
Professor Leslie Chew, SC	Dean, School of Law, Singapore University of Social Sciences
Mr Peter Lam	Principal and CEO, Temasek Polytechnic
Mr Jason Chan, SC	President, Law Society of Singapore
Mr Wan Kwong Weng	Vice-President, Singapore Corporate Counsel Association
Mr Yeong Zee Kin	Chief Executive, Singapore Academy of Law
Mr Jerry Koh	Managing Partner, Allen & Gledhill LLP
Mr Cavinder Bull, SC	Chief Executive Officer, Drew & Napier LLC

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Members:

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Ms Jessie Tan Director, Legal Industry Division, Ministry of Law

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Professor Lee Pey Woan Dean, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University

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Mr Cavinder Bull, SC Chief Executive Officer, Drew & Napier LLC

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Ms Chong Yiun Lin	Deputy Secretary (Higher Education and Skills), Ministry of Education

Members:

Ms Juthika Ramanathan	Chief Executive, Supreme Court of Singapore
Mr Hui Choon Kuen	Chief Executive and Dean of the AGC Academy, Attorney-General's Chambers
Mr David Quark	Executive Director, Singapore Institute of Legal Education
Ms Eileen Chong	Director, Singapore Institute of Legal Education
Mr Peter Lam	Principal and CEO, Temasek Polytechnic
Mr Wong Khai Leng	Course Chair, Diploma in Law and Management, Temasek Polytechnic
Mr Jason Chan, SC	President, Law Society of Singapore
Mr Yeong Zee Kin	Chief Executive, Singapore Academy of Law
Mr Wan Kwong Weng	Vice-President, Singapore Corporate Counsel Association

Acknowledgements

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Ms Melissa Khoo	Former Deputy Secretary (Higher Education and Skills), Ministry of Education
Mr Adrian Tan	Former President, Law Society of Singapore
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Professor Goh Yihan, SC	Former Dean, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University
Mr Foo Chee Hock	Former Dean, Singapore Judicial College
Mr Rama Tiwari	Former Chief Executive, Singapore Academy of Law
Ms Foo Yuet Min	Director, Drew & Napier LLC
Ms Gloria Lim	Former Director, Legal Industry Division, Ministry of Law
Dr Ellis See	Second Director, Legal Industry Division, Ministry of Law

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Ms Wee Yen Jean	Assistant Registrar, Supreme Court of Singapore
Mr Ho Linming	Justices' Law Clerk, Supreme Court of Singapore
Ms Megan Chua	Justices' Law Clerk, Supreme Court of Singapore
Ms Lu Huiyi	Justices' Law Clerk, Supreme Court of Singapore
Mr Wong Weitao	Justices' Law Clerk, Supreme Court of Singapore

C. Annex C – Trends affecting the legal industry

1. The rise of Asia

Trend
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asia is projected to grow rapidly. Businesses are emerging or expanding within and into the region by establishing regional offices and shifting supply chains to developing countries in Asia, to reap the benefits of a large population base and an increasingly affluent society. Asia's economic growth is expected to outpace global economic growth. China, especially, has emerged as one of the world's most influential powers, both economically and geopolitically.
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the digital economy gains momentum, there will be increased opportunities for businesses to access untapped markets in Asia. Political uncertainty in the West, may also drive investments towards Asia.• This presents a new area of work for lawyers in family offices and private wealth for private clients, and in intellectual property and business expansion-related services (eg. regulatory, corporate work) for corporate entities.
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Singapore is a common law jurisdiction situated in a region with primarily civil law jurisdictions as its neighbours and trading partners.• Singapore will face competition from other jurisdictions in the region seeking to establish their status as a legal hub.
Implications for the legal industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lawyers must increase their familiarity with civil law practices, in particular Chinese and Indonesian law, to access lucrative markets in the region. The ability to understand both common law and civil law will give Singapore lawyers a competitive advantage especially where business transactions span across multiple jurisdictions.• An appreciation of other cultures and being multi-lingual will also become increasingly important.

2. Proliferation of technology

Trend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID-19 pandemic jolted the legal sector into integrating technology into long-established processes to remain relevant, efficient and competitive, such as the implementation of virtual hearings and remote notarial services. • Data is being harnessed by businesses in all types of industries to drive everything from business development analytics to court strategies and has generated a global economy valued at approximately US\$3 trillion as of 2017.³⁴ • Legal technology service providers and solution developers have introduced increasingly sophisticated tools such as case management services, know-your-client screening solutions and AI tools to improve efficiency and productivity. These tools may allow routine tasks to be automated or tedious processes to be simplified, thereby freeing up resources for higher value activities. • More recently, AI tools such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT have shown promise in being able to churn out basic legal opinions and draft simple legal documents. • There is increasing demand for lawyers with expertise in nascent areas borne by technological advances. The more prevalent use of technology in businesses such as cybersecurity, data management and privacy, and digital assets, demands that lawyers be familiar with these issues.
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proliferation of technology in every aspect of life will present new challenges and complexities in the law (eg, how laws and legal documents are drafted, and legal issues that will arise from the use of AI in commerce etc.). There are avenues of opportunities for lawyers with the ability to transcend both technology and how it interacts with the law. • The ability to harness technology effectively can improve work processes and operations in a law firm (eg, the use of e-discovery tools), thus leading to savings in time and costs in the long term.
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The profession will need to keep up with the speed of change and be familiar with the use of new technology tools relevant to their work, deepen their knowledge in new areas of law and be equipped to be nimble enough to switch to new ways of working. • Historically, technological advances have propagated from Western countries. Lawyers from these countries generally have a first-mover advantage in terms of familiarity and expertise.
Implications for the legal industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological advances will inadvertently widen the divide between the digital and analogue worlds. Lawyers who cannot keep up may be left

³⁴ *The Value of Data*, World Economic Forum, V Thirani and A Gupta, 22 September 2017.

behind. The Government will continue to encourage and support lawyers to embrace technology and invest in platforms to facilitate adoption.

- Greater adoption of technology solutions would potentially reduce the need for manpower resources in straightforward legal matters such as the drafting of wills and simple contracts, and relegate certain types of work to non-legal professionals (such as e-discovery). This may cannibalise the “bread and butter” work for junior lawyers and lawyers in small firms.
- Lawyers must be equipped with an acceptable baseline level of savviness in technology and data literacy to leverage the tools at their disposal effectively. They will need to increase their advisory capability in new areas of technology and, to do so, must develop a keen understanding and appreciation of technology.
- Lawyers will need to keep apprised of new risks and typologies introduced by new areas of technology to manage their own internal processes and establish the necessary safeguards.

3. Resident labour force issues

Trend
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on the downward trajectory of global population growth, a manpower crunch is expected by the end of the decade. Singapore relies on the import of talent and labour and is facing the challenges of an aging population. It is expected that the resident labour force will eventually decline.
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A declining younger population may potentially result in greater competition to attract the best to enter the legal profession, resulting in a smaller pool of lawyers having to deliver increasingly complex work.
Implications for the legal industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• While the issue may be ameliorated by measures such as outsourcing or more liberal manpower policies, lawyers must leverage on available resources through strategic use of technology and diversification and upskilling of the manpower available.• The legal workforce will need to be prepared that their jobs may be redesigned to better harness available resources and create value for their clients. Such job redesign efforts will also provide opportunities for support jobs, such as ALPs, to upskill and meet such demand, thus enhancing their career prospects.

4. Changing consumer preferences

Trend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The greater use of technology (in particular, the prevalence of the Internet and social media) has put a wealth of information and resources within easy access of clients, resulting in a narrowing of the knowledge gap between laypersons and their lawyers. Consumers, both individuals and businesses, are more sophisticated, better aware of their legal needs, rights and options, and are better placed to assess the advice provided to them. • Businesses that are developing their operations and footprints have expanded and upskilled their in-house teams to take on enhanced roles and more sophisticated tasks. Many businesses are increasingly enhancing the capabilities of their in-house counsel and upskilling them to take on a greater role as legal and business advisers, rather than just depending on external lawyers. • There is also a shift towards a more consumer-centric approach in delivering legal services with self-service options and firms tailoring their services to meet specific needs and preferences, such as providing unbundled services and price transparency. • Additionally, new tools made available by Government and private initiatives³⁵ such as self-service legal aid solutions and AI-powered programmes have made it easier for consumers to bypass the need for a lawyer in more straightforward matters.
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyers who adapt to these preferences and provide value above and beyond the norm will gain a competitive advantage.
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the new sources of information and self-help tools have significantly reduced barriers to access to justice, they have also increased the pressure (including price pressure) on lawyers to provide value-added services such as offering creative or sophisticated solutions to differentiate their services from these resources. • More frequent interaction with digital tools and exposure to technology has inevitably swayed consumption habits towards digital resources and services that allow for faster or more convenient (and even round-the-clock) access, and which are more cost-effective. • The upskilling of in-house counsel may result in a reduced scope of work outsourced to external lawyers or law firms.
Implications for the legal industry

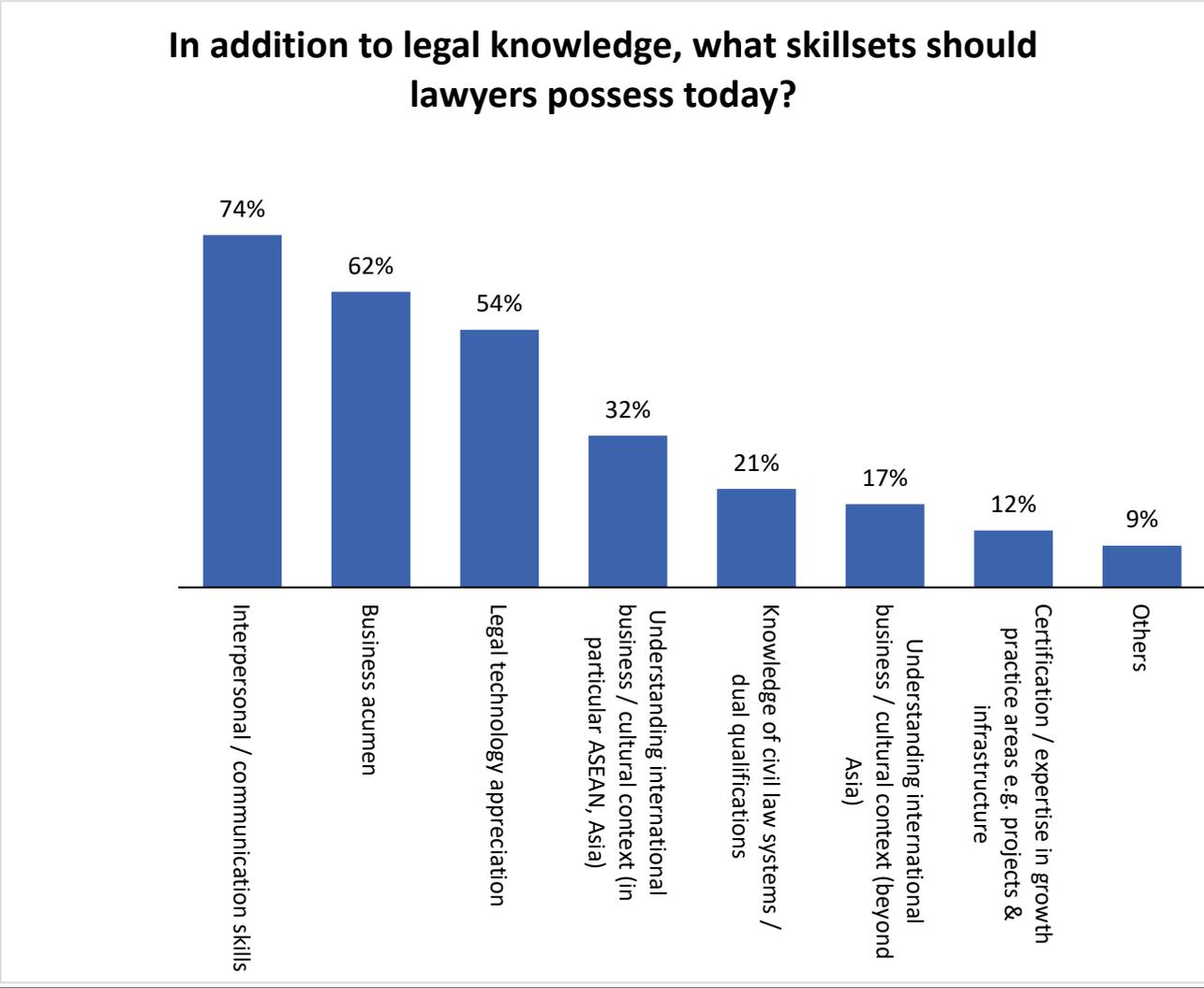
³⁵ These include outcome simulators such as the Judiciary’s Motor Accident Claims Online (“MACO”) platform and the Legal Aid Bureau’s Divorce Aide, litigation tools such as the Judiciary’s Divorce eService and Community Justice and Tribunals System (“CJTS”), and general technological tools such as ChatGPT.

- It is no longer sufficient for lawyers to simply be familiar with the law. Lawyers must be trained for creative problem-solving and be prepared to introduce innovative service offerings to distinguish themselves from competitors.

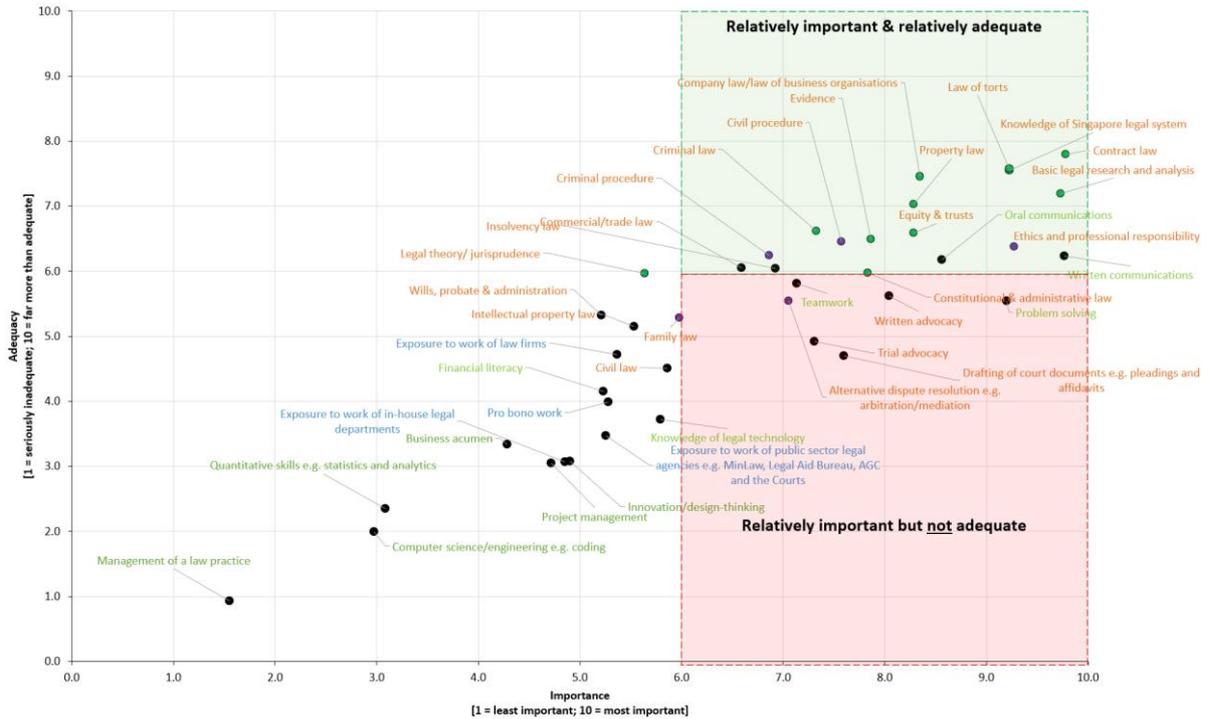
5. Change and uncertainty in demand

Trend
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As Singapore enterprises regionalise, and with increased trade in a borderless world, the corresponding demand for legal advice and assistance in areas such as business restructuring, insolvency, M&A and labour and employment laws is expected to increase.• There is greater emphasis on sustainability and environmental impact in commercial enterprises.
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New global agendas such as sustainability and environmental impact will create new opportunities for growth and expansion for the profession.
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The uncertainty as to which areas of work demand more attention and resourcing makes it difficult for lawyers to predict growth opportunities accurately.• As the law in emerging areas may not be developed, it is harder for lawyers to establish a pipeline of work.• At the same time, lawyers are generally the first port of call to advise on potential legal issues and compliance with new regulations and requirements.
Implications for the legal industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As novel areas crop up, lawyers will have to be quick to understand the developments in these areas, navigate them with little guidance or precedents, and attempt to seize new business opportunities and obtain first-mover advantage.

D. Annex D – Summary of skills surveys conducted with key stakeholders



Source: MinLaw Legal Sector Manpower Survey (Oct-Nov 2020).



Legal skills/knowledge	Importance	Adequacy	Should be compulsory for ...			Compulsory module in ...			
			Local LLB/JD	Part B	Practice training/CLE	NUS	SMU	SUSS	Part B
Legal theory/jurisprudence	5.6	6.0	64%	21%	1%	✓	✓	✓	
Knowledge of Singapore legal system	9.2	7.5	99%	35%	3%	✓	✓	✓	
Basic legal research and analysis	9.7	7.2	99%	11%	10%	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethics and professional responsibility	9.3	6.4	50%	85%	84%	✓	✓	✓	✓
Criminal law	7.3	6.6	94%	35%	20%	✓	✓	✓	
Family law	6.0	5.3	57%	19%	21%			✓	✓
Contract law	9.8	7.8	100%	30%	48%	✓	✓	✓	
Law of torts	9.2	7.6	97%	27%	46%	✓	✓	✓	
Constitutional & administrative law	7.8	6.0	97%	21%	20%	✓	✓	✓	
Company law/law of business	8.3	7.5	99%	27%	31%	✓	✓	✓	
Commercial/trade law	6.6	6.0	50%	27%	4%	✓	✓	✓	
Equity & trusts	8.3	6.6	99%	27%	26%	✓	✓	✓	
Property law	8.3	7.0	99%	26%	42%	✓	✓	✓	✓
Insolvency law	6.9	6.0	50%	36%	22%				✓
Intellectual property law	5.5	5.2	18%	1%	20%				
Wills, probate & administration	5.2	5.3	25%	7%	6%			✓	
Evidence	7.9	6.5	63%	44%	32%	✓	✓	✓	
Civil procedure	7.6	6.5	21%	93%	55%				✓
Criminal procedure	6.9	6.2	29%	90%	49%				✓
Trial advocacy	7.3	4.9	55%	68%	51%	✓		✓	
Written advocacy	8.0	5.6	56%	51%	53%				
Drafting of court documents	7.6	4.7	28%	91%	52%				
Alternative dispute resolution	7.1	5.5	36%	83%	38%			✓	
Civil law	5.9	4.5	51%	45%	44%	✓	✓		✓

Non-Legal skills/knowledge	Importance	Adequacy	Should be compulsory for ...		
			Local LLB/JD	Part B	Practice training/CLE
Written communications	9.8	6.2	45%	69%	67%
Oral communications	8.6	6.2	43%	69%	65%
Business acumen	4.3	3.3	5%	3%	57%
Financial literacy	5.2	4.2	49%	30%	51%
Knowledge of legal technology	5.8	3.7	39%	65%	63%
Computer science/engineering e.g. coding	3.0	2.0	10%	7%	12%
Quantitative skills e.g. statistics	3.1	2.4	11%	8%	11%
Teamwork	7.1	5.8	42%	30%	47%
Problem solving	9.2	5.5	65%	48%	68%
Innovation/design-thinking	4.9	3.1	15%	9%	36%
Project management	4.7	3.1	11%	8%	41%
Management of a law practice	1.5	0.9	0%	3%	10%

Practical skills/knowledge	Importance	Adequacy	Should be compulsory for ...		
			Local LLB/JD	Part B	Practice training/CLE
Pro bono work	5.3	4.0	46%	26%	36%
Exposure to work of ...					
law firms	5.4	4.7	43%	27%	34%
in-house legal departments	4.9	3.1	35%	25%	29%
public sector legal agencies	5.3	3.5	41%	28%	34%

Source: Skills Survey conducted by Reform of Legal Education Secretariat 2022

E. Annex E – Proposed civil law elements for law schools to impart under recommendation IV(B)(2)

1. Substantive procedural differences between common law and civil law systems:
 - (a) Judicial decisions and precedents vs codes and statutes
 - (b) Role of precedent
 - (c) Inquisitorial vs adversarial system
2. Legal terminology and structure in Indonesian and Chinese systems:
 - (a) Contract law (*ie*, codifications, rules and provisions for contract formation, interpretation and remedies). Students should be familiar with the broad framework and underlying concepts for this, particularly in the Indonesian context (*eg*, Indonesian Civil Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata Books III and IIIA)) and in the Chinese context (*eg*, Book III of the PRC Civil Code).
 - (b) Dispute Resolution (*ie*, procedural codes). Students should be familiar with the various dispute resolution mechanisms and the general frameworks therein, particular in the Indonesian context (*eg*, Law on Judicial Power (Undang-Undang Tentang Kekuasaan Kehakiman), Law on Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution (Undang-Undang Tentang Arbitrase dan Alternatif Penyelesaian Sengketa) and Code of Civil Procedure (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Acara Perdata)) and in the Chinese context (*eg*, Civil Procedure Law, Arbitration Law and Mediation Law).

F. Annex F – CPTL recommendations

S/No.	Specific recommendation	Implementation status
Structural recommendations		
1.	Uncouple admission to the Bar from the completion of a practice training contract.	To be implemented from 2024 Part B.
2.	Raise the standard and stringency of the Part B examinations.	
3.	Lengthen the practice training period from six months to one year.	
Training-centric recommendations		
1.	Confer on practice trainees limited practising rights after six months of training.	To be implemented from 2024 Part B.
2.	Require (subject to limited exceptions) the completion of the entire practice training contract with a single law practice.	
3.	Permit up to three months of the practice training contract to be completed at approved in-house legal departments of pre-qualified corporations.	
4.	Encourage, but not mandate, the rotation of practice trainees to contrasting practice areas.	
5.	Encourage, but not mandate, a buddy system for practice trainees.	
6.	Require quarterly reviews or feedback sessions between supervising solicitors and practice trainees, and deliberate discussions on the issue of retention.	
7.	Introduce a channel for the surfacing and mediation of disputes in relation to practice training contracts.	Implemented. The Law Society has published a template training contract that includes mediation and termination clauses.
8.	Mandate CPD-style training focused on developing skills specific to practice trainees and junior lawyers during the practice	To be implemented from 2024 Part B.

	training period and a minimum of two years thereafter.	
9.	Introduce initiatives focused on training the trainers (<i>ie</i> , supervising solicitors).	
10.	Promulgate materials to provide better guidance for law practices and supervising solicitors in relation to training.	Implemented. The Law Society has launched its Careers Portal listing openings for Practice Training Contracts and has published Guidelines on the evolving relationship between supervising solicitor and practice trainee.
11.	Designate a “training partner” for each law practice with six or more lawyers.	To be implemented from 2024 Part B.
12.	Introduce an audit review mechanism, which will allow independent review solicitors to conduct random audits on law practices to improve quality control of the training provided.	
13.	Encourage the opening up of in-house training in larger law practices to practice trainees from smaller law practices.	
14.	Introduce a scheme for mentoring by “elder statesmen” of the profession.	Implemented. The Law Society has launched and encourages participation in the SCMediate scheme where a Senior Counsel mediates disagreements between law practices/practitioners.
15.	Introduce formal avenues for practice trainees to interact and share their experiences with one another.	Implemented. The Law Society has launched the Young Lawyers Law Mentors Scheme which is an informal peer-to-peer support scheme that pairs up young lawyers with law graduates, trainees, and newly qualified lawyers.
Process-centric recommendations		
16.	Introduce a moratorium for practice training contract applications.	To be implemented.
17.	Enhance the publication of training and retention information by law practices.	Implemented.

		The Law Society has launched its Careers Portal listing openings for Practice Training Contracts and has published Guidelines on the evolving relationship between supervising solicitor and practice trainee.
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G. Annex G – Comparison of CPD requirements between other professions and jurisdictions

	CPD requirements	Finer requirements	Remarks
Chartered Accountants	120 CPE hours over 3 years, of which 60 must be verifiable	A minimum of 20 verifiable hours including 2 verifiable hours of ethics, must be completed each year. Alternatively, 6 hours of verifiable hours of ethics can be completed over a rolling 3-year period. Members who hold specialisation credentials have to complete a min of 8 verifiable hours relevant to their specialised areas each year, which can be counted towards fulfilling the CPE requirements of a CA.	Verifiable CPE hours refer to activities that could be objectively verified by a competent source. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending seminars, talks, workshops. • Attending in-house training provided by employer. • Attending online programmes or e-learning. • Studying for an MBA or other post qualification programmes. • Preparing for and sitting for professional examinations. • Writing technical articles, papers, and books. • Coaching or mentoring. Non-verifiable learning refers to activities that do not have any evidence to corroborate the hours to be claimed.
Architects	20 hours over a CPD year	At least 10 hours in formal CPD.	
Doctors	50 CME points per 2 years	20% of the requisite number of CME points in each of the branches of medicine registered.	

Radiographers	24 CPD credits within 2 years	Voluntary.	Regulated allied health care professions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational therapy • Speech-language therapy • Physiotherapy • Diagnostic radiography • Radiation therapy
Real estate sales	6 credits per year	4 credits must be from courses related to professional competencies authorized by council for estate agencies, 2 credits on generic competencies.	Tied to licensing renewal
Workplace safety and health officers	40 safety development units in 2 years	20 SDUs must be from structured training and remaining hours are made up of either structured or unstructured SDUs. Able to carry up to 10 SDUs into the next cycle.	Tied to licensing renewal
Professional engineers	40 PDUs over 1 year	Minimally 20 structured PDUs.	PE to decide on their own CPD activities; general principle is that the CPD activities must be relevant to the scope of practice of each PE. Online hours – 2 hours for 1 unit.
Singapore Institute of Directors members	60 CPD hours over 3 years	At least 24 hours must be verifiable.	Members may face suspension if CPD hours are not met.

<p>UK</p>	<p>In 2016, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (“SRA”) published a Competence Statement (“CS”) which replaced their CPD system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-2016, lawyers had to complete a minimum number of hours of CPD activities annually. • Now, the CS sets out the competences that the SRA identified as integral to providing a proper standard of service • Process is rooted in self-reflection and identification of gaps vis-à-vis the CS. • Lawyers submit annual declarations when renewing their PCs that they have reflected on their practice and identified/addressed any learning and developmental needs. <p>Lawyers must keep records of self-reflection and developmental plans for submission to SRA in event of regulatory breaches/complaints.</p>
<p>USA</p>	<p>American Bar Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the Minimum CLE (“MCLE”) model in 2017, which has been adopted by a majority of USA states. • Lawyers are required to complete credits in 3 compulsory areas (i.e. Ethics and Professionalism, Diversity and Inclusion, and Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders). <p>There is no national accreditation scheme or programme. CLE is administered at state-level by the Supreme Courts through CLE commissions/boards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California: MCLE + 25 hours/3 years • New York: MCLE + 32 hours (<2 years PQE)/ 24 hours (>2 years PQE)/2 years • Washington DC: 1-day Professional Conduct and Practice Course upon admission/after 5 years of inactivity • Utah: MCLE + 12 hours /year
<p>Australia</p>	<p>Generally, all lawyers are required to complete 10 CPD units annually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyers self-assess whether the activities/courses offered extend their knowledge/skills in relevant areas of practice/professional development. • Lawyers must complete 1 CPD unit from each of the 4 compulsory CPD fields (i.e. Ethics and Professional Responsibility, Practice Management and Business Skills, Professional Skills, and Substantive Law). • PCs will only be renewed if the Law Societies are satisfied the practitioner has complied with the CPD obligations. • Subsidiary legislation sets out the calculation of 1 CPD unit vis-à-vis training hours/activities. <p>The Law Societies conduct random audits each year.</p>