



# Nigeria

## Vocational Training

Vocational training is mandatory for persons seeking to practice law in Nigeria. The Nigerian Law School educates and trains law graduates in vocational knowledge and practical skills that would enable them function as barristers and solicitors. The vocational training process at the Nigerian Law School lasts for one year. The following bodies and institution take charge of the legal practice qualification in Nigeria.

## Council of Legal Education

The Council of Legal Education is the supervisory body responsible for the accreditation, control and management of legal education in Nigeria. The Council of Legal Education runs the Nigerian Law School.

The Council of Legal Education also recognises some foreign law degrees from approved overseas universities for purposes of admission into the Nigerian Law School. These foreign degrees must be from common law countries.

## Nigerian Law School

The Nigerian Law School is a vocational institution established to provide practical training for law graduates at the second and final stage of formal training of lawyers in Nigeria. All persons who have obtained a university law degree and want to practice as lawyers in Nigeria must attend the Nigerian Law School.

Admission into the Nigerian Law School is open to persons who possess a Qualifying Law Degree and have obtained at least a 'pass'. Degrees obtained through part-time studies, long-distance learning or study as an external student are not recognised for admission to the Nigerian Law School.

## Body of Benchers

The Body of Benchers is responsible for the formal admission of successful students from the Nigerian Law School to the Nigerian legal profession. The Body of Benchers also issues a 'Certificate of Call to the Bar' which qualifies a person to be enrolled at the Supreme Court of Nigeria as a barrister and solicitor.

## Bar Part 1

Foreign trained graduates, who have obtained their LL.B Degree from universities outside Nigeria, are required to undergo the Bar Part 1 programme, which is designed to introduce the general principles of Nigerian Law to the foreign trained students. The Nigerian Law School only admits those holding a law degree from foreign universities approved by the Council of Legal Education. Only foreign universities in common law countries or teaching common law courses are approved by the Council. Furthermore, the Bar Part 1 programme is also open to students who passed the English Bar finals or the Legal Practice Course in England & Wales.

Foreign graduates are required to provide evidence in the form of an academic transcript to prove they studied the following core law courses at undergraduate level: law of contract; law of tort; constitutional law; criminal law; land law; equity and trusts; law of evidence; and commercial law.

The Bar Part 1 programme lasts for a period of six months, within which time students are required to study and pass the following subjects in the Bar Part 1 examination: (a) Nigerian Legal System, (b) Nigerian Land Law, (c) Nigerian Constitutional Law, (d) Nigerian Criminal Law. Application for admission into the Bar Part 1 course commences in April and ends in May each year. The Bar Part 1 programme begins in June at the Nigerian Law School Headquarters in Abuja.

## Bar Part 2

Upon the successful completion of the Bar Part 1 programme and exams, foreign graduates proceed to the Bar Part 2 programme. Graduates from universities in Nigeria are exempt from the Bar Part 1 programme because they have studied the foundation of Nigerian law at a university undergraduate level. Graduates from common law jurisdictions who have taught law for a minimum of five years in a Nigerian Faculty of Law are exempt from the Bar Part 1 programme. Also, graduates from non-common law jurisdiction that have taught law in any Nigerian Faculty of Law for not less than ten years are exempt from the Bar Part 1 Course.

At the Bar Part 2 programme, students undergo intensive training to equip them with the relevant knowledge and skills to effectively practice law in Nigeria. They study the following compulsory courses: criminal litigation; civil litigation; corporate law; property law; and law in practise. The Nigerian Law School runs an integrated curriculum that helps students develop knowledge, skills and ethics for the profession. The Nigerian Law School's curriculum and teaching method was revised in 2008 to adopt a new system which integrated the acquisition of the knowledge of the law, legal practice skills and professional ethics.

In addition to academic learning, students undergo training on the ethics and traditions of the legal profession, such as comportment and dressing, and other non-academic rules that they must abide by as members of the Nigerian legal profession. They must also attend three formal law dinners; two in the course of the Bar Part 2 programme and one after the Call to Bar Ceremony. Students are prohibited from advising clients or appearing in court proceedings prior to being called to the Nigerian bar.

For further information please visit the Nigerian Bar Association- <http://www.nigerianbar.org.ng/>

Correct as of February 2017

## There is a five step process involved in each NCA assessment, as illustrated:

