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## INTRODUCTION

The past two years have been punctuated by uncertainty. The coronavirus pandemic will undoubtedly go down in the history books as a grim period starting when, on 31 December 2019, the World Health Organisation reported 'novel' viral pneumonias of unknown cause' in Wuhan, China.

When President Ramaphosa announced a countrywide lockdown on 26 March 2020 little did we know that the initial restrictions from 26 March to 16 April would be extended again, and again. For the Class of 2021 the anticipated final two years of student fun - amidst the hard work - networking, making lifelong friendships and vacation training were pretty much curtailed.

It has been my privilege to 'meet' the top students at the universities in this feature. They demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability that was necessary not only to get through this period and the challenges that have come as a result, but also to excel despite personal fears. Their responses to the questions I posed indicate a greater awareness of the need for family and friends, for social interaction, recognition of an unequal world, the need to excel but at the same time that they have but this one life - and fun is an important element of a life truly lived.

However, these graduates also comment on the feeling of isolation, the difficulties of lectures at a distance and of being at a distance from classmates and friends. Elizabeth Rimmer, chief of British organisation, LawCare commented that junior lawyers, in particular, have been adversely affected by working from home during lockdown. '50% of our support contacts last year were from junior lawyers,' she said. 'Deterioration in mental health, struggles with working from home, isolation and poor supervision were common concerns shared with us.' She also said, 'The most vulnerable time in anyone's legal career is making that transition into practice and it's particularly tough to embark on a legal career during these uncertain and difficult times. We would urge legal workplaces to reach out and listen to the concerns of junior staff and take active steps to provide them with support and nurturing supervision.' And most senior management at South African law firms have made a considerable effort to do just that while struggling to come to terms with an unprecedented event themselves.

But despite the downside of the pandemic, as is always the case, there is an upside too and it is an exciting time to start out. The way work is done has changed and law students will be a part of a new legal industry. As some of the NQs of 2020 and 2021 have noted, they had the advantage of being tech savvy. So, while they were at a considerable disadvantage in some areas, their advantage was being able to assist more senior lawyers with the technical changes to traditional ways of working.

It is likely that a hybrid way of working will be the norm in future and it certainly does offer an opportunity to improve that work/life balance. But it also comes with the danger of always being 'on duty' - this is an issue about which all levels in the hierarchy will need to be aware if the danger of burnout, always prevalent in the legal industry, does not rise as firm and client blur the lines between work and personal time.

As many of the Class of 2021 begin their journey to become admitted attorneys, it is to be hoped that their flexibility, adaptability and acknowledgment of the value of having people in their lives (and of being there to support others too) will make for a kinder legal environment.

I wish the Class of 2021 much success, careers that bring satisfaction and lives filled with that all important element - fun.

*Myrle Vanderstraeten*

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# Building your legal career after the pandemic – advice for candidate attorneys and newly qualified lawyers

DAVID LANCASTER

The past two years have been extremely difficult for law students and candidate attorneys who commenced studies and articles at the height of the pandemic. Although technology, flexible working and online learning enabled high levels of productivity to be maintained, much else was lost. Many people experienced isolation and a lack of personal contact whether at university or in the workplace. While some enjoyed the novelty and convenience of working from home, by 2021 signs of stress were appearing, as the important rituals of work life were lost: lunches, coffee with colleagues, face-to-face meetings and the normal day-to-day human interaction that we all took for granted before March 2020.

It seems that, thankfully, the worst is behind us, and we are returning to normal. While some degree of remote and flexible working will remain – and this is a good thing – we now need to start thinking about how we build our careers now that we are largely back in the office.

I have given some thought to the things that enabled me to build a successful legal career, and I hope that sharing them will be of some value to those embarking on their journeys as attorneys or candidate attorneys. In addition, through my coaching of young lawyers over the past few years, I have identified some issues that are important for them.

There are five areas I would suggest are worth focusing on – learning, being present, building networks, creating structure, and never forgetting your obligations to the wider community.

## Learning

Technical proficiency is a given in this profession if you are to be successful, but learning should be lifelong. You should take every opportunity to improve your skills. This includes learning on the job, participating enthusiastically in your firm's training programmes, considering appropriate and relevant post graduate learning opportunities, and taking advantage of any secondment opportunities that come your way – be they with clients or with law firms overseas.

I had some of my most profound learning opportunities years after completing my degrees and articles, and the opportunity to enhance your skills on an ongoing basis is extraordinarily energising. The more you know about your subject, the better you will be at your job, and the more confident and enabled you will be.

Also remember that learning includes acknowledging the things you don't know, and not being afraid to ask questions.



Lancaster

## Being present

'Being present' is a state of mind, as well as being physically present in the workplace. Lawyers need two sets of skills to be successful. Firstly, technical skills, and, secondly, what used to be called 'soft skills'. The latter include the ability to build relationships within your firm, knowing how to build client relationships, the ability to develop junior lawyers, understanding when and how to delegate effectively, giving valuable and constructive feedback, and the ability to work in a team. These are things you would not necessarily have learnt at university. The way you learn these skills is to be present in the workplace – to attend and participate in meetings, to take the opportunity to attend client events, to closely watch partners and clients in action as they interact with others, and to be visible and engaged in a positive and non-pushy way at all times in your firm.

If you are disengaged, and absent, your ability to learn these soft skills will be significantly inhibited.

Incidentally, you don't have to be an extrovert to be good at these things – some of the most effective lawyers I have met have been introverts!

## Building networks

A good lawyer will generally have two sources of work – internal and external. Internal referrals will come from other lawyers in your firm. Work that comes to you directly from clients is what I call external referrals. As you start your career your main source of work will be internal – work given to you by your principal or other lawyers you work with, or from lawyers in other practice areas in your firm. Respond promptly, effectively and efficiently to all internal referrals you receive. In so doing, this work will continue to flow. Learn to assess your capacity to take on new work so that you don't over promise and under deliver. Prepare to go the extra mile if necessary.

Build relationships with your peer groups in your firm, and outside. In time, your peers may become partners or clients and will be in a position to support your career in multiple ways. Start thinking about how you can build relationships with clients. What can you do to support their businesses and add value? This begins by completing all client engagements promptly and efficiently, with attention to detail. As you start interacting with clients it is really important to have a clear understanding of what their expectations are in terms of the services they want from you, and what an appropriate and acceptable fee would be. (How to bill and conversations with clients about value is another whole area of discussion but is a skill you should learn over time from more senior people in your team). In time you can deepen these relationships in other ways – presenting to clients on new developments in the law that are of relevance to them, secondments, attending client functions and seminars, and building relationships with those of your peer group who may be working at the client. Your goal in time is to be seen as a trusted adviser to a client.



Building networks is a lifelong process and much of it will happen organically if you get the basics right. However, it is worth reflecting each year on where your work came from in the preceding twelve months. Expressing appreciation to those who have given you work in a professional and appropriate way is not a bad thing!

## Creating structure

The practice of law, while immensely rewarding, can be taxing and stressful. It often requires long hours of work under extreme pressure. The work can be demanding and the stakes high. You will face pressure from two sides – client needs, and the requirements of your firm to achieve hourly and financial targets. In addition, you are working in an environment full of highly educated and driven people who often have a low tolerance for mistakes. Sometimes it can be overwhelming.

Your goal is to create a way of working that will give you a long and sustainable career in the face of these pressures. To do this you need structure. Everyone has a different body clock and a way of working, but try to put some basic rules in place. These would include regular working hours – starting and ending work at the same time each day and leaving the physical office at a reasonable and regular time. Some things should be non-negotiable – exercise, proper nutrition (which includes making time for a lunch break each day), down time when you don't look at your phone or email, family time which includes dinner time with your spouse or partner or children or friends, and regular holidays and short breaks where you should generally try to be offline. In this regard, plan your year in advance so that you can schedule away time in consultation with the partner you report to.

In time you and your colleagues should agree communication protocols in your team. How do you communicate when it is urgent? What time of the night would it not be appropriate to send an email on a matter which is not urgent? Will your downtime be respected when you are on holiday, or do you need to monitor emails all day and night?

Having a supportive team around you is critical and that is why your ability to delegate and work effectively in a group of people are such key skills to learn. The toughest jobs are easier to tackle when you have colleagues with you sharing some of the load.

There will be times when the work is so critical and important that regular working hours go out of the window. That's fine; it happens, but try not to make it the norm, and after intense periods of work reward yourself and recharge with some time off – even an afternoon off, or a long weekend can work wonders.

## Your obligations to society

In South Africa, with its high levels of poverty and inequality, lawyers are a uniquely privileged group of people. Their earnings are well above the average South African income, and they have higher levels of job security compared with most. They generally work in pleasant surroundings with like-minded and highly educated colleagues. This privileged position, while achieved through hard work and sacrifice in many cases, is something we should be grateful for. It should drive us to want to give back to our community.

Law can be an important instrument in achieving social justice. I would urge you to use your skills to advance the rule of law in the country and find ways to support the most vulnerable members of our society. You can do this through involvement, for example, in pro bono matters, by supporting bursary programmes at your alma mater, by getting involved with NGOs and other community organisations in your area where your legal skills are invaluable, and by being a mentor and role model to others.

It's important for you to make this contribution in whatever way you can, and one day when you look back on your career, these contributions may well be the things you value most.

## Conclusion

I often say to the people I coach that a legal career is a marathon, not a sprint. You need to get the basics right to have a sustainable and successful career over a lifetime. There will be ups and downs but paying attention to some of the fundamentals I have outlined will give you a framework for success. ♦

*Lancaster is the former Senior Partner of Webber Wentzel; currently consulting to Webber Wentzel and coaching lawyers.*

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## keeping an eye on law

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# Ambition is the shape of you

PAUL GILBERT

What is ambition? What is its shape and colour? What is ambition's energy force? How does it compel you?

I am fascinated by the word and how it alters our perception of success and even of our identity.

When I was training to be a lawyer, my only ambition was getting to the end of the week without being shouted at or making a mistake. I never remember thinking that becoming a partner in a law firm was a thing for me. After all, I was on the lowest rung of the ladder with an unreliable 1974 Vauxhall Viva and an overdraft that gave me sleepless nights. Partners were other worldly beings who moved about the office on silent rails; they had vast Volvo estate cars, Labradors named after historic battles, Boden-esque children named after holiday islands and houses with implausibly long drives high on the hill.

Then when I became an in-house lawyer, things changed a little. Being surrounded by people who called themselves managers, I felt more at home with the idea that I might become a manager one day. I could supervise a bit, and report up and cascade down; it didn't seem too difficult.

To be an executive leader, however, well – that still felt far beyond me. I think it would be fair to say that I never felt entirely comfortable with the title and its implication that somehow what talents I had made me worthy of being set apart from other colleagues.

I have realised since that leadership is not bestowed on us by a title or hierarchy, but it is something that is within all of us. It is to be human. We do not become leaders, we are leaders; but to fulfil our potential as leaders, we must learn to trust our feelings and then let our feelings guide our actions.

If our ambition is to acquire leadership status, I think it might feel hollow when we get there. If our ambition is to make a difference, I think our roles become rich with leadership possibilities.

I remember being at one of those very fancy conferences for lawyers somewhere implausibly swanky in Europe. I was surrounded by people who wanted to be accepted as

leaders. For most people this meant being the General Counsel. If they were already a General Counsel, then they wanted to be a 'Global General Counsel', working in ever larger companies. These were good people, but it felt to me that some were pursuing leadership as a collection of adornments, rather than exploring their authentic leadership potential. It felt a little thin and perhaps also excluding.

Ambition, in this way, is mostly about accepting an imposed hierarchy of importance and someone else's idea of our place in it. It is reminiscent of a sort of class war. You may be a GC, but are you a GC of a FTSE? And if it is a FTSE, is it a FTSE 100? And if it is a FTSE 100, how many countries do you operate in? Do you report to the CEO? Do you have a driver? What is the colour of your executive travel card status?

It might be important in its way, but it is not the person you are or the difference you can make. It is a potential rabbit hole of joylessness, where imagination, contribution, kindness and care might disappear, and where not securing the next rung of someone else's ladder is a sign of your failure and even shame. This is ambition where there isn't even a pin prick of light emanating from the soulless arse of apparent success.

However, what if we reclaim the word? What if we wrestle it back from all the fast-track matrix bollocks and high-performance mythology? What if the word is not about status, or our next job title, but about our story, our difference, our growth and our fulfilment?

I hope ambition can be more than navigating an HR development plan where we move ourselves around a made-up grid using only three-letter

acronyms. I hope ambition can be so much more than the grinding pursuit of linear career goals. I hope we can make ambition a rich and thoughtful exploration of how we influence, share, listen, create and make our difference.

Ambition is then the shape of you. ♦

*Gilbert is CE of LBC Wise Counsel (UK).*



Gilbert







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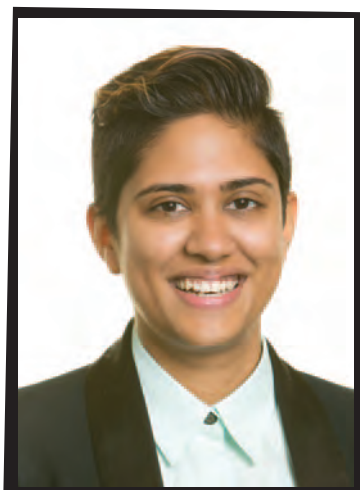
# Twelve tips for students thinking of a career in law

LERISHA NAIDU

**1** Commit to the work – Being a lawyer is not quite as sensational as the average television series legal melodrama that grips mass audiences. While it probably does involve a good suit and many a late night, there is a lot about being a corporate lawyer that would not make for riveting television. In competition law, which is my area of specialisation, there is never a dull moment, particularly because the law is comparatively new and developing. However, the reality is that, although cases may often be challenging, interesting and precedent-setting, the everyday practise of law requires a bit of blood and sweat.

**2** Grab opportunities to learn from the best and be prepared to unlearn – I began my legal career as a legal researcher to the Deputy Chief Justice of the South African Constitutional Court, Dikgang Moseneke. To kickstart my professional journey under the tutelage of a South African jurist (and person) of such calibre and esteem was an honour. It stretched me to the limit, and then it stretched my limits, cultivating my innate desire to unpick things. It also taught me about changing my mind and the process of unlearning (which is sometimes just as important as learning).

**3** Acknowledge that it took a village – Growing up in Newlands West in KwaZulu-Natal, my parents always encouraged social consciousness, discourse and frank debate. They invested in our education and travel, locally and abroad. Cognisant and very much a part of the local community, we also came to learn about the world beyond it. With that foundation in place, I have had the benefit of both support and mentorship throughout my legal career from inspirational leaders in the industry that shaped my approach to legal work and my view of the world. Where I am today is, therefore, the product of a group effort, for which I am deeply grateful. Who was part of your village?



Naidu

**4** To know what you do want, first know what you don't want. Let's just say that I started out knowing what I didn't want and was guided by my

strengths. I knew that anything remotely mathematical or medical would not play to those strengths (and was not in the public interest). I envisaged writing novels in corner cafes, or being in the music industry (which was also probably not in the public interest). But what it all boiled down to was that I was passionate about words, creative in some ways and technical in others, and interested in people. All those attributes fitted quite nicely within the field of law. And so that's how I stumbled into it – not pursuant to some childhood dream (romantic as that would have been), but rather by a process of elimination and by identifying my strengths and finding a gig that supported them. It isn't a story that you would play inspirational background music to when telling it, but it worked out excellently anyway, because I feel grateful to be doing something I love to do.

**5** So, work out what you love and do that – I enjoy engaging with a field of law that is challenging and intellectually stimulating, involving new and different legal issues, and a growing knowledge of different markets. In short, I love being able to learn every day and appease my fairly insatiable desire to be a perpetual student. I love interacting with other legal minds who are leaders in the field. I love meeting other people and learning about them and the work that they do. I love finding creative solutions to legal questions – thinking outside of the proverbial box. I love working in a team and being part of the project of empowering others by sharing knowledge, mentoring and training.

**6** Don't take yourself too seriously – That sounds counter-intuitive in the field of law (which is oh-so-serious), but being open to sucking up knowledge like a sponge and being humble throughout the process of learning and growing expedites the developmental process and exposes you to more, more quickly.

**7** Embrace resilience and grit – Sounds like a line from a self-help book, but one cannot give up because someone, in a particular moment in time, is critical of you. Those criticisms are simply input for becoming an ultimate powerhouse.

**8** Confront the things that you aren't great at – Decide to work through your issues rather than playing 'ostrich in the sand'.

**9** Remember that certain things are part of a long game – Quitting before the game is up may amount to a premature surrender – be patient. Equally,



know when to change course; resilience does not require commitment to something that is inconsistent with your passions and strengths.

- 10** Recognise your privilege – In a country with a progressive Constitutional dispensation but deep divisions and inequality, I find it important for me to recognise my privilege, encouraging a constant dialogue with myself around learning and unlearning. We should all make an effort to pay it forward.
- 11** Be an ally – We must all become effective allies in the fight against inequality. To do this, we must educate ourselves on what effective ally-

ship means in relation to all the ‘-isms’ and what we personally need to learn and unlearn to equip ourselves to better support marginalised groups.

- 12** Remember you are an agent for change. You have the power to influence your own growth (rather than idly waiting for someone else to do it). You are an agent in your own, unique story – through it, you will inevitably achieve a ripple impact in the world. ♦

*Naidu is a Partner at Baker McKenzie (South Africa).*

## So you want to be a lawyer?

Q&A WITH MICHELLE DAVID, NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT SOUTH AFRICA CHAIR

### Q: If you could go back in time, what would you tell the version of yourself trying to decide which career to choose?

A: Don't follow what you are passionate about, rather analyse and consider what you are good at. As weird as it may sound, passion grows from being really good at something, while being passionate about something may not mean that you have the skills or aptitude to be good at it. The quickest way to kill a passion is to realise that you are just not cut out for it. It is better to support a passion by having a career that will fund it. Bob Marley is said to have been passionate about soccer; there are video clips available of him playing, but I, for one, am glad that he chose to do something that he excelled at, that he had a skill set for, a unique voice. There is no doubt that I would tell the younger, more idealistic me that despite the many who say that you should follow your passion, ideally, you should look to a career that you are going to be great at – it is even better if you have the skills to be good at what you are passionate about. It always makes me sit up and listen in interviews, when someone says they chose a career in law because they are passionate about it, but never seem to follow up with why they are good at it, and so should be employed.

### Q: What are the lessons you've learnt, going from CA to Chair of a global law firm?

A: There are just so many, but I think the most important one is to listen to understand and not to respond. To take time to understand what someone is saying without interruption must be the most difficult thing, but it is probably the most useful tool, especially if you are considering a career as a lawyer. Not only does it allow you to fully understand a conversation, it enables you to recognise different perspectives and emotions. To me, it is the highest form of respect that you can give any co-worker. At the end, you may not be moved from your own views, but what you have done is given the other party an opportunity to be properly heard, and yourself the benefit of properly considering and under-

standing a different approach.

Whether as a CA or as the Chair, it's a skill that will assist you to grow both in your career and personally. Importantly, you will take time to understand and appreciate client issues. The other important thing that I have learnt is to respect everyone and to be open to being wrong about something. Being wrong is not something to take personally; we all get it wrong at some time or another. It is, however, an opportunity to learn and grow, embrace it and try to avoid doing things in the same way.



David

### Q: How do you keep yourself humble, considering your career successes to date?

A: Throughout my life, I have acknowledged that who I am is not because of me, but rather because of a higher power and my family. I have always been a firm believer in a person not being defined by their job title, but rather their worth as a person, so I try at every step to avoid my job being a benchmark for who I am. While I am grateful for the many opportunities and the wonderful career that I have been blessed with, I am mindful to not define myself or others by tags of school, work or title, and to show everyone the respect that they deserve because of their actions.

### Q: How do you manage your time so that you are able to be a good career woman, wife and mother?

A: I think that regardless of the stage you are at in life, you never have time; what you do have is the ability to manage your time. My model is to work as much as possi-

ble in the week so that I can spend time with my family and friends on weekends. I also try, and sometimes fail, never to be overwhelmed by my daily schedule. It's a matter of trying to take each day as it comes and acknowledging that the career of law demands flexibility, because clients never work according to your schedule. I try not to be all things to everyone all of the time; when I am with my family, I try to keep work at bay, and when I am at work, I try to focus on what is needed in that day. Early on, I recognised that each person has their own needs, and so developing your own schedule is vital if you want to get some balance.

### Q: Any advice for graduates?

A: Remember that getting a degree is only the first step in your career in law. Being a candidate attorney is an opportunity to learn the practice of law, so make time for it. Give yourself the opportunities to make the most of it. Use the platform to understand your strengths in the field, as well the careers that exist within the legal field. Importantly, accept that you don't know everything, are not expected to know everything – so be sure to ask questions. ♦

# To turn your camera on or not to turn your camera on?

FATIMAH ESSACK

## Recollections of a COVID-afflicted Candidate Attorney

'Your Lordship, it is my humble submission that I was not absent from the 'offices' of my principal for more than 30 working days during one calendar year from the date of commencement of my practical vocational training contract.'

This is a familiar phrase for many candidate legal practitioners who've had to apply for their admissions during 2021 and 2022, as we faced the Level 5 National Lockdown period announced by Cyril Ramaphosa on a casual Monday evening, on 23 March 2020.

I started my articles bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, making the move from sleepy Durban to vibrant Johannesburg, and spending many an evening re-paginating bundles or committing passionately to murder the printer while trying to clear yet another paper jam. A pandemic was not the challenge I had in mind, but as the circumstances of the world evolved, so too did the law and how we started to practise it.

One thing lawyers love to do is TALK, and when we could no longer do it face-to-face, we, like those in many other professions, turned to platforms like Zoom or Microsoft Teams. I sat in front of my screen with a barely washed face, still in my pyjamas at 10 am, not exactly the put-together candidate attorney one might expect. I saw my directors and senior counsels on the most personal of levels: notably without suits, ties and haircuts.

Navigating the virtual horizon was also not easy when most of my directors were part of Generation X and could not figure out that they were, in fact, on mute, or not, and that we could hear the argument they were having with their kids in the background.



Essack

### Patience is a virtue and virtue is grace

The entirety of my articles was served during the national lockdown as we moved up and down levels. Practical Legal Training (PLT) and the Law Society, in conjunction with LEAD (Legal Education and Development), had to become more lenient in their approach to our suffering.

Trust me, you will be eternally grateful for many years to come that PLT became virtual, or at least partially so, as you can curl up under a blanket with the gas heater and a cup of hot chocolate, rather than being subjected to a cold lecture hall in the middle of winter.

The situation felt even more precarious when our board exams were moved to November, another unprecedented event, having not yet completed half of the syllabus. So, with that in mind, prepare for anything, literally anything, as even our question paper decided to remind us of the existence of COVID with scenarios alluding to the economic hardship that many individuals and companies faced as a direct result of the lockdown. We wracked our brains trying to figure out if we had learnt anything at all in that litigation rotation, which consisted of uploading documents onto CaseLines and never physically going to court.

### The return to the office and how to conduct yourself virtually and in person

The return to the office hasn't happened to the extent that it was at the start of my articles. Teams come in depending on necessity, and you can often go weeks without seeing some of your colleagues. Most meetings still happen virtually, and the only court you will likely visit is the magistrates' court, which is truly in a league of its own.

However, teams like Real Estate are in nearly every single day, and have resumed to almost 'normal' due to the necessity of physically seeing clients, and the Deeds Office's reliance on paper.



The office still feels like a ghost town, and there are no big lunches with your work friend group. I feel that this has contributed to a disconnection among colleagues, and loneliness, as we were so integral to each other's daily lives at the office. It creates a culture of isolation and we, as legal practitioners and future legal practitioners, must now put in place new measures to ensure that we don't lose touch with our directors and fellow colleagues, and that we maintain the connections we set out to make.

Some ways that you can achieve this:

- Don't assume that you will not be asked to turn your camera on during a virtual meeting. You should always be prepared to appear professional, even if you're not conducting an in-person meeting. I have had judicial case management meetings with many judges, and one specific judge decided that we should introduce ourselves on the very day I decided not to look my best.
- Always be mindful of your tone and general etiquette in correspondence, as it is extremely important that you're not misunderstood. This can often be misinterpreted in a professional setting and can misrepresent your capabilities. This is especially important, bearing in mind the rise of short messaging services like Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp, and applies equally when communicating with work colleagues. Many teams have put in place work WhatsApp groups to streamline the ability to collaborate with one another.
- If you find yourself working remotely, it can be incredibly isolating and distracting.

It is imperative that you always check in with your supervisor, so that they're aware of the work you're currently busy with and whether you have the capacity to be assigned another task, as that develops and maintains a relationship of mutual trust and co-operation and ensures that you're getting the best possible experience from your articles. Your main aim should always be to learn and grow from the experiences that come before you. Staying silent will not make a good impression on anyone.

### Parting words

With all the negatives that COVID-19 brought, I truly believe it hastened the very rigid legal profession into the fourth industrial revolution and enabled hybrid working, which was never thought to be possible. With that in mind, we must appreciate the flexibility that is now available to us.

To an extent, however, I do feel robbed of a true articles experience and would've loved to have been more exposed to the pomp and splendour that the profession is known for. It's my truest wish that, as the restrictions are lifted and life feels a little more normal, we will be able to strike a balance between the traditional practice of law and embracing the digital age. ♦

*Essack is an Associate with Lawtons Africa. The article was supervised by Penny Chenery, a Director.*

## Clear writing... this could be a game-changer

HANS MUHLBERG

As a lawyer who likes to write, I am occasionally asked for tips on how to write clearly. So the idea of writing a piece about clear writing has been *on my radar* for some time. I feel that we need to have a *conversation around it*, that we need to *touch base*.

We all know that it's not a *level playing field*, but the good news is that you can most certainly improve your writing. But to do so, you need to *think outside the box*. You may even need to engage in some *blue-sky thinking*.

You will also need to *put in the hard yards*, *push the envelope*, *give 110 per cent* – there's no avoiding this, I'm afraid; *it is what it is*. But look on the bright side – you can already write a bit, so it's not exactly a case of needing to *re-invent the wheel*!

You will need help. *Going forward*, I suggest that you find a mentor, someone who can *drill down* – the two of you will need to *synergise*, you'll need to be *on the same page*, and you'll need to *sing from the same hymn sheet*.

Is it worth the effort, you ask? Dude, it's an absolute *no-brainer*. As your writing improves, your colleagues will start seeing you as one of those superstars who's blessed with *core competencies*, someone *who's ahead of the curve*. In time, you may even come to be regarded as a *thought-leader*. So yes, *get your ducks in a row*!

It's simple, really – the idea that good writing is important in business is clearly *gaining traction*, it's fast becoming the *new normal*. So, improving your writing

skills is an absolute *no-brainer*, a *win-win*. And given that you already know how to write, don't see this as a negative, see it rather as a *journey*, a case of *upping your game*, a case of picking *low-hanging fruit*. Yes, I get that you're busy, but you will find the *bandwidth*.

*Moving forward*, there is a lot of work to do. But there is one tip I can share, a tip that's easy to remember, and a tip that will result in an immediate improvement in your writing. It's very simple:

Avoid buzzwords and jargon! ♦

*Muhlberg, is a SA, UK and EU qualified IP lawyer. He presently finds himself in the UK, offering consulting and content writing services to various law firms: muhlbergip@gmail.com.*



Muhlberg



# Grow your business while growing their legal careers

The Khulisa Programme, launched in 2019, aims to impact the legal fraternity as a whole and advance its transformation agenda.

Participating law firms from Absa's existing panel will benefit from improved visibility and relationship building, whilst existing Absa-employed LLB graduates will benefit from doing their Articles at black-owned law firms. Further to this the law firm will get access to funding from Absa.

## **Three main initiatives of the programme**

- *Secondment – Fully paid secondments for lawyers in small black law firms into Absa Group Legal.*
- *Absa Articles Programme – Absa employees who have recently completed law degrees serve their Articles at black-owned law firms.*
- *Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) – Absa Group Legal will offer benefits to participating law firms, which could include funding at preferential rates.*

And the results speak for themselves, since launch, two employees have concluded their Articles and have been admitted as Attorneys of the High Court. Both candidates have secured Legal Counsel roles in Absa Group Legal team.

## **Benefiting all involved. That's Africanacity. That's Absa.**

**[www.absa.africa](http://www.absa.africa)**





# Absa Legal Khulisa Programme: immediate impact – long term goals

At the heart of the Absa Legal Khulisa Programme is an initiative led by relationships. When Nkululeko Khumalo first took the role of Chief Operating Officer at Absa Group Legal, Black-owned law firms were the minority on the bank's legal client list. And changing this mattered to Absa.

'When I joined Absa's legal department, I found that our spend with the Black-owned law firms was low and I wanted to find out why. It took us about six months to unpack all the various reasons by reaching out to various legal firms, and by engaging our in-house lawyers. The root cause was relationships – or the lack thereof. It certainly wasn't about capability, qualifications, or experience. And this is when our vision began to take shape. We wanted to build partnerships with Black-owned law firms where Absa could make a difference,' explained Nkululeko.

Thanks to this vision, the Khulisa Programme launched in 2019: 'Khula' meaning to grow in Zulu, and 'Khulisa' meaning 'cause to grow'. Absa now supports both emerging Black law firms and small Black-owned law firms.

The programme includes three elements: an articles programme; secondment of lawyers from external firms into Absa; and Enterprise Supplier Development funding, whereby the Absa supply chain can bring Black law firms into the mainstream economy through preferential financial support, helping them to grow.

## First graduates

Bernice Abrahams and Dudu Langa are the first graduates of the programme and served articles at two Black-owned law firms – CMS South Africa and DM5. Both candidates have now secured Legal Counsel roles back within the Absa Group.

What makes their stories so inspiring is their determination to become lawyers despite tough circumstances. Prior to graduating, both were working as administrators in the legal department and studying part-time to complete their LLBs.

## Retaining talent and encouraging employees' passion

In order to be admitted as attorneys, Bernice and Dudu faced having to take a salary cut, leave the employ of Absa, and complete articles at a legal firm. As single parents, job security and their pension were an enormous trade-off.

'We recognised that as longstanding employees, a salary cut was impossible to consider for Bernice and Dudu. The Khulisa Programme made it possible for us to empower our colleagues to follow their dreams. Through our partnerships with the law firms, they were able to maintain their income while completing articles.

'It was encouraging to receive positive feedback about their performance from the law firms during their articles. Where initially their mature age may have been assumed to be a potential disadvantage, it instead became clear that it was, in fact, an advantage,' says Nkululeko.

Having been admitted, Bernice now works in the Absa Group legal team and Dudu is in the Absa Group litigation team.

## Quid Pro Quo

Besides providing qualifying Absa employees a place to complete their articles, there are many advantages for the law firms partnering in the Khulisa Programme. They have the opportunity to send their appointed lawyer as a secondee into the bank for a set period, and these lawyers benefit from exposure to the financial services environment and the nuances of legal work from this perspective.

Riza Moosa is a Director at CMS South Africa, a dynamic law firm and participant in the Khulisa Programme. As a full service corporate transactional firm actively addressing transformation, CMS saw the partnership with Absa as an ideal avenue to contribute to developing talent within the industry. 'CMS has been involved with the Khulisa programme since 2020, and provided an opportunity for Bernice to complete her articles. Coming to us with years of work experience, she was an ideal candidate. Her strong work ethic saw her progress through our various departments, learning quickly, and taking stress in her stride. Being a part of this programme has been extremely meaningful to us as a new firm, committed to transforming the industry. Absa's commitment to transformation and their genuine interest in helping our business grow has made partnering with them a real honour.'

Another participant was DM5 Incorporated, a dynamic law firm with a reputation built on commercial legal services. Partner at the firm and Head of the Dispute Resolution and Investigations Department, Lerato Mathopo heard about the Khulisa Programme in 2019. 'Absa has been a client for a number of years, and when they launched this initiative, we were eager to get involved. It's a reciprocal agreement whereby we expose graduates to commercial work to complete their articles. In turn, we gain a better understanding of our client and build a relationship with them outside the usual client-attorney role. For a firm passionate about empowering Black females, Dudu was a great match. It was empowering to be part of her journey to become a lawyer. In fact, it was such a great experience that we accepted another Absa candidate in January.'

'We believe that, in a small way, we are contributing to the transformation of the legal profession, and what really matters is that we are playing a part in increasing the profiles of smaller Black-owned firms and helping them grow,' says Nkululeko.

## Impacting generations

'Hearing from both Bernice and Dudu that their children have seen their mothers work hard by day, study by night, and keep motivated to achieve more has inspired them. Their children are now dreaming bigger dreams for themselves, thanks to the example set for them, and this is very gratifying to hear.

'Many more are interested in taking part in the programme, and what's really exciting is that it has the potential to impact individuals, families, communities, and law firms, making the Khulisa Programme worthwhile,' concludes Nkululeko. ♦



# Being a lawyer in the 21st century – during a pandemic

LERATO MOLEFI

The dawn of COVID-19 and the abrupt introduction of the nationwide lockdown shook the entire world. Most industries, especially the legal fraternity, were required to shapeshift from what they were to what they could be. I was in my second year of articles when lockdown was introduced, and I was already familiar with working from the office, in-person meetings and training sessions, as well as the ease of access to my principal and team members. I found this experience extremely beneficial, not only did it assist my learning journey and exposure to different legal matters, it also helped foster a collaborative working culture.

## The in-person to virtual working transition

The transition from in-person and office working to being behind a laptop screen 24/7/365 was difficult. This transition happened when I was in my third rotation in the litigation team, a rotation I soon learnt highly dependent on in-person interactions. Remote virtual working meant the reliance on technology for tasks such as team meetings, receiving work instructions, and collaborating with team members. With this new reality, we all (in one way or the other) had to adjust to and adopt new ways of working and methods of communication, as well as the etiquette that came with it. This was not easy. However, being a new generation lawyer comes with the perks of understanding technology and having the ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances.

I realised I had to be intentional about making this new way of working work for me and my team. What became my biggest game-changer was the constant Microsoft Teams team meetings, which not only tracked work allocation, but had a social element to them (always having your camera on). This kept the spark in the teams' working relationship. The most important thing, other than learning during articles, is the ability to network and fit into a team. This was fairly easy before lockdown, however, the shapeshifting required a change in how I networked and interacted with my colleagues. I found that reaching out individually to colleagues for a chat or virtual coffee or lunch (as we would have done before) made the biggest difference – it helped us stay connected with each other. The biggest trick was the **how** – how to foster virtual relationships while remembering that we are in a professional setting, how to keep the team spirit going despite the busy sched-

ules we all had – it all came down to etiquette.

## Overcoming the virtual working dynamic

No-one received a set manual on how to network and engage with each other during a pandemic. We all took it a day at a time, making do with what worked for us and those around us. How I overcame the virtual working dynamic was to observe how my colleagues interacted with each other during team meetings, and I used that as a stepping stone to approach and network with them after the team meetings.

I also had to pick up my old dusty interpersonal skills and polish them for reuse. Because these skills were pre-existing, what I learnt during lockdown was now mixed with the interpersonal/in-person skills, so adjusting to hybrid working was not as difficult as one would expect. Instead, it gave me a holistic and fresh approach to surviving in a law firm, where my experience and learning may need to shapeshift from time to time.

My biggest takeaway from the past two years is that innovation and adaptability go hand in hand and, once mastered, can make a big difference in a person's career. My advice for students (law students, in particular) is to ensure that they fully understand the everchanging landscape of technology, as well as how this may impact the work we do. It is also important for students to hone their networking skills so that they are applicable for both in-person and remote working, understand the nuances that come with shapeshifting, and always remain true to themselves. Flexibility and adaptability will go a long way in making a success of your career. ♦



Molefi

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# Words of wisdom

IMAAAN SAYED, NAVRESH TANGUR AND QAASIM GANEY

Picture this – fighting contractual demons, overcoming constitutional nightmares, clawing your way to the top of the hierarchical law-school pyramid, and conquering a pandemic.

Now picture this – throwing it all out the window. Welcome to navigating your articles. Unfortunately, in practise, there are no prescribed readings and textbooks that can prepare you for your articles. With that being said, we hope that this article provides a brief guide to navigating your way through the murky waters and unfamiliar territory that is your articles. Let's call this: *what to expect when you do not know what to expect – a quick guide to establishing your own jurisdiction in corporate South Africa*.

## Technology and our virtual lives

Law, as we know, is a people-centred profession. As we found ourselves behind the bars of the hard lockdown, there was a resulting gasp from the legal community. When the help signal flashed, it was time for the tech-agile younger generation to shine. We began our articles of clerkship immediately after two years of online learning at university. This equipped us with key transferable skills relating to working online.



Sayed

First, it is important to be familiar with online communication platforms such as Microsoft Teams, and understand how to schedule, join, and set up meetings. Students can familiarise themselves with these platforms by participating in societies and coordinating virtual events. It is key to be familiar with the 'ins and outs' of Microsoft Word, and focus on grammar, formatting, and attention to detail.

Finally, the most important technological skill that a prospective candidate legal practitioner can practise prior to embarking on a legal career is organising their virtual life. This entails organising emails into folders and subfolders, organising instructions into various categories based on priority, and always taking the extra time to organise a new file into its relevant folder when saving it.

So, the biggest tip is: organise, organise, and organise some more. Two handy tools in this regard are: use a reminder application to keep up with your tasks, and add entries for all work-related duties into your calendar.

## Understanding instructions

In our experience, we have learned (sometimes the hard way) that the quality of work produced is inextricably linked to how well the instruction – from either an associate or a partner – is understood. There will be times when you think you

did an exceptional job at a specific task, only to come to the sobering realisation that it is not what the partner was looking for. It is like scoring a goal on the wrong side of the field. To mitigate this, ask questions. When receiving instructions, ask as many questions as it takes to understand the instruction. The pandemic has only highlighted how important this skill is. Many of us receive instructions via Microsoft Teams and, therefore, we need to ensure that we understand the instruction because sometimes it is not physically possible to knock on a door, (unless we are missing the Microsoft Teams update that enables door-knocking). In the era of working from home – perhaps the new norm? – do not be alarmed if you find yourself staring at your superiors' Microsoft Teams bubble, hoping that it changes from red (unavailable) to green (available), while praying that you are fast enough to catch them in time.



Tangur

## Administrative duties

During your articles of clerkship, it is impossible to escape the wrath of administrative work. Instead of lying in a pool of your own misery, it is better to understand the importance of this task. Administrative tasks are important because you learn how a firm works from the ground up. Remember 'wax on, wax off' from Karate Kid? It is exactly that. Always remember that administrative work is as important for your development as understanding legal concepts. Ask yourself, how do you climb the mountain that is articles? You take one step at a time. Some steps will be easier than others, but you need to take them all to get to the top.



Ganey

## Conclusion

The reality is that as a candidate legal practitioner, you, unfortunately, do not know much. This is both expected and understood as you enter the legal world as a freshly hatched fledgling. However, use this opportunity to grow both your legal and personal databases. Absorb every moment and look at every opportu-



nity (whether it is printing a file or drafting a document), as a chance to learn something. Remember, anyone can do the task, but ask yourself, what is going to make you stand out from everyone else that has done it before? Although this is a busy two years, it is only that – two years. Like anything, the experience is what you make it. As Roald Dahl once said, 'no matter what it is, go at it full

speed, embrace it with both arms, hug it, love it, and above all, become passionate about it ... lukewarm is no good'. ♦

*Sayed, Tangur and Ganey are Candidate Attorneys with Webber Wentzel.*

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# Tips and advice on becoming a candidate attorney

FIONA WORWOOD

You're nearing the end of your LLB degree and about to embark on your journey as a candidate attorney – Congratulations! The legal profession is a noble one; it comes with many wonderful, exhilarating moments, and some stressful ones too.

Your time as a candidate attorney is set to be the toughest, and yet probably the most memorable and rewarding, of your career. You've surely been warned of the love-hate relationship you may develop with the photocopy machine, and the gruelling hours of magistrate's court appearances. However, what few mention is the mentorship and the foundation that you receive from excellent, experienced legal minds in the fraternity.

Your articles are a time to learn, develop and experience the law hands on. It is extremely important to find a firm that offers you the opportunity to engage meaningfully with various aspects of the law. From court appearances to meetings with counsel and consultations with clients, you want to get exposure to it all. One of the most fundamental characteristics that any candidate attorney should have is a desire to learn; this will help you on those late nights attending to urgent matters or studying for admission exams. There are many people in the profession willing to teach those who are willing to learn.

This profession allows you to encounter a new problem to solve every day, with a diverse range of practice areas. You will never experience the mundane – from complex tax structures to assisting in a family matter, to closing a commercial contract or even dealing in property transfers, there is something for everyone.

Taking the initiative and becoming a problem solver will serve you well in the years to come, should you choose to become an attorney, but to help you along the way, here are a few tips which may assist:

**1. Ask questions.** Rather ask a question to receive clarity on a task than perform a task incorrectly due to a misunderstanding. It is especially important to ask for assistance or clarity at the time that the instruction is given, and not right before the deadline, as this may affect the deadline that your seniors are trying to make for their clients.

**2. Always carry a notepad.** You may be given an instruction on your way out of the office, or in a formally arranged meeting. Having a notepad will help to ensure that you obtain and record the correct instruction.

**3. Learning to time manage is crucial.** As a budding attorney, you will soon learn that attorneys sell their time, and part and parcel of this is adequate time management. Allocating a certain amount of time to tasks may assist, as well as making a to-do list each day, to check off the tasks needing to be completed.

**4. Proof read the document or email again.** It is very easy to omit an attachment or miss a spelling error which could be easily fixed by reading over the document or email again.

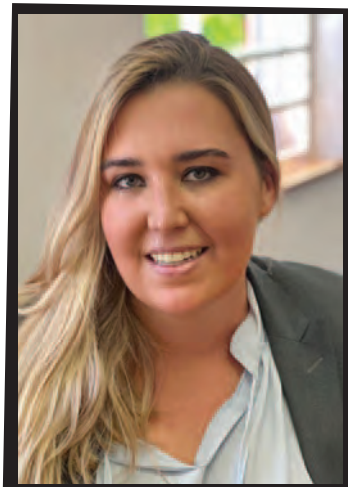
**5. Expect the unexpected.** Keep a spare set of shoes in the car, along with a suit jacket, permanent marker and a black pen – trust me.

**6. Expectation and reality.** During my articles, the phrase 'management of expectations' was drilled into me. This boils down to communicating information to prevent gaps between an expectation and a reality. This means informing your seniors when you need more time to complete tasks, or that you do not have capacity to take on further tasks. The same applies when dealing with clients and adequately informing them of when deadlines and deliverables will be due; and, in the event that there is a delay, updating the client.

Pursuing a career in law is going to be a roller coaster. Working for a firm which supports you on this journey, that assists you to learn and offers you the platform to gain this exposure, is key to a successful career. An open-door policy and a firm of legal professionals who are willing to invest the time to teach, motivate, encourage and guide you during your articles is priceless.

In your legal career, you will always be challenged – mentally, emotionally and intellectually. It is not for the weak or the faint of heart, but one thing is certain: the hard work you put in at the start of your career will help you in the future. ♦

*Worwood is an Associate Commercial, Property & Litigation with Cowan-Harper-Madikizela.*



Worwood

# Life as a boutique law firm Candidate Legal Practitioner

BRANDON PINKER

So, you have decided you want to be a lawyer. That's what I thought too. When I registered to study for my BCom Law and subsequent LLB qualification, I did so with a degree of naivety, because I did not expect what was in store for me. This was partly due to the rigours and emotional rollercoaster that is practical vocational training – honestly, nothing and no-one can prepare you for the wild ride that is articles – also partly due to being unable to foresee these so called 'unprecedented times'. But fear not. With the right advice, mentorship and hard work, you will get through it all.

'God works wonders now and then; Behold a lawyer, an honest man.' – Benjamin Franklin. Jokes aside, not all boutique law firms have the same work ethics and strategies, nor will they demand the same level of excellence from their minions. Some principals are friendly, and from what I have heard, some are not. Finding the boutique law firm and principal who is a right fit for you is a matter of calculated luck. I can attest that your colleagues do indeed become your extended family, so if you have the luxury, start looking for positions early, and choose wisely by asking yourself what type of environment you want to work in.

## Set yourself apart

In order to set yourself apart and obtain a candidate attorney position at a law firm, you need to be dynamic and hard-working while, at the same time, having a positive attitude and being excellent at working in a team-based, deadline-driven environment. This is easier said than proven or done. The first of many steps is to get that initial foot in the door for an interview. This is partly achieved by ensuring that you have a high level of academic achievement, specifically in those university modules that underpin the fields in which your chosen law firms specialise, as well as by being well-spoken. The latter can be communicated in your covering letter, which must be neat, concise and informative, but more importantly, be tailored to the specific firm.

Having said all that, you need not only to set yourself apart during your interviews when applying to be a candidate legal practitioner, but also when it comes to the two-year interview process that is practical vocational training. Due to the nature of a boutique law firm, there is no one to hide behind and little to no margin for work being repeated. Accordingly, you are expected to constantly learn and grow as a legal professional, and not to make the same mistake twice.

## Hard work and determination to succeed

The reality is that, generally, in life, and specifically the legal profession, nothing gets handed to you on the proverbial silver platter. It probably goes without saying that one needs to be willing to put in the hours and stand out by applying yourself and giving your best effort to every task bestowed upon you, no matter how miniscule these may seem. It is important to remember that the more you know about the inner workings of a transaction, or the reasoning behind why something is done in a certain way, the better legal practitioner you will become in the long run. Therefore, although practical vocational training provides an incredible opportunity to learn, whether an individual maximises

opportunities given to them depends on the degree of their positive attitude.

## The impact of two COVID years on the way things are done

We, as a nation of honourable people, which, depending on who you ask, naturally includes legal practitioners, have been forced to adapt to a new way of living and working in a short space of time. Gone are the days where legal practitioners have mountains of paperwork and vast libraries to trawl through –

at least that has been my experience in a non-litigation environment. These days, a legal practitioner's most useful tool, apart from the obvious – their brain – is the laptop they cart around 24/7. Therefore, especially in a boutique firm where there isn't the luxury of access to secretaries and typists, ensure that you are at least well versed in the most widely used word processing and document creation software, and be able to format these documents to perfection. Above all, be prepared to learn the particular styles of those for whom you will work – each person will have a different preference. Furthermore, and apart from the reduction of paperwork, the main adaptation of working life can be seen in the continued preference for online meetings, rather than those in person.

## Day-to-day advice

Although setting yourself apart and hard work are key to success, here are a few basic tips:

- i. Ensure you constantly learn, and ask questions when you realise you do not understand something;
- ii. Don't leave tasks to the last minute – time management skills are key to not having regret down the line when your deadlines are not met;
- iii. Always carry a pen and paper when attending a meeting or summoned to receive instructions. No matter how good you think your memory is, you will likely forget something; and
- iv. Lastly, a quick trip to the office coffee machine or local coffee shop can be a life saver, but don't forget to drink water.

I am surviving practical vocational training, so can confirm it does not kill; and yes, it does make you stronger. ♦

*Pinker is a Candidate Attorney with Falcon & Hume.*



Pinker





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**Candidate membership** requires no experience, but must be converted to full membership once the candidate member has three years of applicable experience in the fiduciary field.

As a candidate member of FISA, you will benefit from all the services that full members have, at 50% of the full member fee.

The only exception is that you will not be allowed to vote at meetings.

## Benefits

Resources such as articles on technical matters in the industry.

Attendance of the annual FISA conference which has an excellent reputation for bringing together academics and practitioners to examine the latest fiduciary trends.

Networking at regional events.

An informative weekly newsletter.

A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme.

## Benefits

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- Testator's soundness of mind
- Living annuity and the accrual claim
- When does a trust terminate?
- Buy and sell agreements
- Actions of an executor
- Matrimonial regimes
- Fiduciary duty of trustees and executors

## More about FISA

We uphold the highest ethical and professional standards and members are subject to the FISA Code of Ethics. We have regular contact and co-operation with the Master of the High Court and SARS, and active engagement in and comment on new legislation.

So why not join FISA and become a candidate member today!

# Legally speaking...

KIRSHIA PILLAY

So there I was on my first day as a Candidate Legal Practitioner (CLP), convinced that everything I had studied in my law degree and Masters over the past five years would ensure smooth sailing in my new journey. This was my first incorrect assumption, as I soon discovered in the ensuing weeks and months.

Not such a fun fact: when you appear for the first time in court, you will suddenly remember that you once thought law school was stressful! The reality is that when those endless hours of research or study transform into practical and tangible law, it is quite a punch to the gut. Indeed, you may be forgiven for questioning your wisdom in choosing a law degree, and it may seem an entirely saner proposition to live on an island, 'far from the madding crowd!'

The fact that you have excelled during your degree will not necessarily prepare you for the sheer volume and complexity of legal issues you confront during your Practical Vocational Training (PVT). This is not an observation meant to discourage, but be aware that your past pressures were vastly different. As a CLP, turning theory into practice is a steep learning curve. Yes, you will be told to develop thicker skin; to work longer hours than that research paper you aced; to interact with individuals of varying temperaments or degrees of patience; where 'urgent' becomes a new buzz word and you are researching law you never knew existed!

It may seem demotivating at first to not know everything that you encounter. However, it is essential to remember that in order to maintain balance emotionally, physically and mentally, we are students who have succeeded in obtaining articles, which is an accomplishment on its own, and that our legal education has really only just begun. Even in moments when I have felt deeply stressed, overwhelmed or demotivated, I hold firm my ingrained values and principles that steered me towards a career in truth, justice and championing the vulnerable. Nothing should set you off your course if your innate compass holds true and steady, and learning is your ultimate goal.

In my humble opinion, here is what I have learned thus far:

1. Ensure that, as a student, your search for articles begins much earlier than you require it. If you know which field you want to practise in, it is also wise to begin articles in a firm in the area of law where your interests lie. It serves no

purpose to do articles in a labour law firm when you actually love criminal law.

2. Many firms offer vacation work or graduate programmes, I would advise, even prior to applying for articles, that you try your hand at vacation opportunities. This will assist in narrowing the area of law you like, as well as familiarising yourself with how you would be expected to work.
3. During articles, you will be stretched to your limits, and your stress levels may skyrocket. Be assured that law firms generally have mentors and fellow young professionals to guide you and play an overseeing role, which is actually an advantage. If uncertain, always do your research and ask questions. Remember, no one is perfect, mistakes are part of learning, and you are deserving of respect.
4. Working hard and smart go hand in hand. Late nights may be inevitable, depending on your workload, and getting used to working long hours straight after a lifetime of having free periods between classes at university is a skill on its own. Try your best to be organised. Your end goal is to learn to apply the law correctly, but also understand the necessity for work-life balance, even in a highly pressurised environment. Honest, understanding and transparent communication between you and your mentor is encouraged.
5. Never underestimate enthusiasm, dedication, diligence and initiative. While you may not know the ins and outs of curatorship or vaguely remember a Latin term on the spot, the initiative taken to try your best, even if the answer may be wrong, is one to be lauded.
6. Be open to criticism, because at the end of the day, it's actually an advantage to you! I am inspired by the people I work with, and accepting constructive criticism and using it to better yourself will only make you a better legal practitioner one day. Although it may be a first dealing with so many personalities in a highly stressful and competitive environment, it's important to remember to focus on yourself at the end of the day, just focus on doing what you need to do and absorb what you can to better your future self in the legal profession.
7. Be patient with yourself. Sometimes you will make a silly mistake, and sometimes you won't understand a simple concept and that's okay, because you are learning and being trained, and in time, you will surprise yourself if you work hard enough.
8. Above all, remain optimistic. The value of knowledge, skills and experience gained is immeasurable and yours for life. As Nelson Mandela once stated: 'Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again'. I, like every human being, am a work in progress. Embrace the growth, challenges and roads that led you to where you are. ♦



Pillay

*Pillay is a Candidate Legal Practitioner with Fairbridges Wertheim Becker.*



# Skills to becoming a lawyer

EMLYN WILLIAMS, SHU'AIB DATAY AND SIPHESIHLE MAYEDWA

The legal profession in South Africa offers a wide range of career possibilities. If you've chosen to complete your Practical Vocational Training to be admitted as a legal practitioner, it is important not to wait until your final year to secure articles. There is a high

demand for positions, and students need to distinguish themselves throughout their degrees. Most law firms recruit students in the second year of their studies.

It is also crucial to do vacation work at firms to ascertain whether you are a good fit for the firm and whether the firm is a good fit for you. Whilst university equips you with a good theoretical base, the jump from university to practice can be unforgiving and, therefore, it is important to hone certain practical skills which will carry you through your articles. A good way to approach bridging the gap is to be enthusiastic and open to learning, to up-

skill yourself and to approach your seniors for continued mentorship and guidance.

Becoming a candidate attorney is a humbling experience in that the realisation of how little you know happens very quickly. In the same way, it is liberating watch yourself go from being a confused beginner to a skilled and confident attorney. Make the most of doing the more unimportant things – indexing and paginating a file, for example,

may seem tiresome, but it is an excellent way to learn the way in which a matter is run, and the timeline or sequence of the various stages of litigation.

Below are the skills that are important to a candidate legal practitioner starting articles:

**1. Be organised.** Many attorneys' downfall is their inability to keep a good diary system. Imagine a plea is due on a certain day, but because you are running 50 matters at once, you miss the due date. You may have had an excellent case,

but now do not have the opportunity to put it before the court. It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the basic compositions of a file. In litigation matters, files are usually divided into pleadings, correspondence and background documents. Try to keep your files organised, there is nothing more embarrassing than being asked for information or a document by a client or your principal when your files are in a mess. Often, candidate legal practitioners are required to run with multiple matters at once, and it is important to

have a diary system which can assist with this. Diarising when pleadings are due, reporting to clients and following up on matters is crucial. Keeping a proper diary system helps to prevent matters falling through the cracks and helps to ensure that you meet your deadlines.

## 2. The devil is in the details.

The make or break of your case is usually in the detail of certain documentation, and it is important to peruse documentation from your client carefully. Read emails carefully; make sure you understand instructions. It is better to clarify what you need to do, rather than misunderstand and present something that is in stark contrast with what was actually required.

**3. Develop your technical skills.** Legal Education and Development (LEAD) offers numerous short courses for candidate attorneys. It is important to sign up for these courses, especially when it is relevant to the work that you do in a specific department at a law firm. Most candidate attorneys will spend their initial time in litigation, meaning that the civil procedure rules will be your bible. Know the rules of court very well!

**4. Writing and keeping record of file notes.** The golden rule to remember in law is to cover your back – ensure that contemporaneous file notes are written, recording everything you have done on a file, be it making a phone call, taking instructions or following up with your opponent or client. File notes should bear the date on which they are made, and the file or matter reference.

**5. Relationship management.** It is important to always show initiative on matters that you are involved in, as this may result in you receiving more work which will assist you in developing your skill set. It is vitally important to build good relationships, especially with the partners in the firm, your peers and court staff. Remember to remain professional and treat everyone with respect.

Lastly, it is important to find your niche, as law is a diverse profession with many areas of specialisation. It is always great when you are drawn to an area of law which excites you, and which you believe has good potential as a long-term career choice. Always think beyond your articles, so you may ensure that you progress further than just completing your articles. Most of all, enjoy the experience and work hard – the skills and experience you learn during articles will set you up for the rest of your career. ♦

*Williams, Datay and Mayedwa are Associates with Fairbridges Wertheim Becker.*



Williams



Datay



Mayedwa

# Experience of a candidate attorney in a boutique law firm

JONATHAN CLOETE

*'Law is an art which requires long study and experience before a man can attain to the cognisance of it.' – Edward Coke*

I am sure that this quote resonates with all legal practitioners. We are in for a lifetime of learning, and never really arriving. It is well known that it is a long apprenticeship to attain admission as a legal practitioner.

The process involves four or five years of slaving over texts and precedents to obtain an LLB; followed by satisfactory performance of a practical vocational training contract under the direction of a principal attorney; completion of competency-based examinations; and once deemed to be a fit and proper person, admission to the High Court. After this, we continue to learn with every new matter that comes across our desk.

You may have decided, or are deciding, to pursue this profession for a number of reasons: you may view the practice of law as a means to obtain a measure of wealth and position within society; you may be following in the footsteps of a family member; you may have a passion for justice; or you may have been unsure what to study and law seemed a viable option. Whatever your reason, you find yourself considering becoming a legal practitioner.

I considered this for a while as well. I began my articles of clerkship a year and five months after obtaining my LLB. I dreaded the thought of articles and becoming an attorney. I had this perception of a tedious lifestyle filled with endless paginating and indexing awaiting me.

Upon entering the profession, I soon realised that, alas, the indexing and paginating was a reality... but there was a vast array of experience to be gained, and maybe I had let others distort my perception of articles. Accordingly, I want to be weary of framing this article as simply recalling my experience and portraying it as the best or worst decision you could make when considering becoming a lawyer.

I started my articles at a boutique law firm. Boutique law firms are smaller and often specialise in certain areas of law. The work environment and atmo-

sphere is synonymous with any start-up; there is excitement, risk and potential for growth and success. As a candidate attorney, you are placed on the ground level of a venture, where the work you contribute is important and vital to the firm's performance.

This exposes you to multiple practice areas, including matters that a firm may specialise in and matters where there may be a niche to learn and grow into. Ultimately, the goal is to have the opportunity to develop your skills so that you are adequately equipped to be a competent attorney who can cope with the demands of the profession.

The room for growth, coupled with the mentorship experience and hands on approach available at boutique law firms makes striving to attain your goal that much more enjoyable.

Upon commencing my articles, I quickly realised that the practise of law is vastly different to the study of it. Observing experienced colleagues wrestling with the complexities of the law, pioneering innovative legal solutions and, dare I say it, enjoying their job, I am filled with excitement at the prospect of what a legal career entails.

Allow me to draw on a quote from Yvon Chouinard to describe those who have shattered the mundane depictions of law:

*'A master in the art of living draws no sharp distinction between his work and his play, his labour and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence through whatever he is doing, and leaves others to determine whether he is working or playing. To himself, he always appears to be doing both.'*

In my short time as a candidate attorney, I have learned that those who excel as legal practitioners have managed to master this art of living.

My advice is to look for an environment filled with experienced practitioners who are passionate about what they do; it makes all the difference. Although it does require long study and experience, the goal to become a legal practitioner is a noble one, and feats worth celebrating rarely come easy. ♦

***Cloete is a Candidate Attorney with Pike Law. The article was overseen by Kendall Smith, a Senior Associate.***



Cloete



# Embrace your practical vocation

CAREY BRIDGER

So you finished your LLB, signed a practical vocational training contract (contract of articles), started working and are now on your way to becoming a lawyer? Congratulations!

Articles is a working environment like no other. It's an '8 till late' routine where you will quickly feel like you learnt nothing at university. Over the next two years, your aim should be to learn everything you can, from the way things are done, to the inter-personal skills needed to survive in the profession.

However, as any experienced lawyer will tell you, it takes more than just learning the ropes to become a successful lawyer, and here are some suggestions of things you can do to give yourself a head start and to set yourself apart.

## Build relationships and communicate

In this profession, you will spend more time with your co-workers than with your own family and friends.

Successful lawyers build **teams**. Become a team-builder. Take the opportunity to build relationships – be likeable and assist others. There will be many times where you will need someone to help you. If you cultivate good relationships, you will be able to draw on those in moments of crisis.

At the heart of everything a lawyer does lies **communication**. Learn how to communicate clearly, and remember, brevity is a virtue.

Embrace **diversity**. We live in a multi-cultural society and the legal system touches us all. Experience different cultures and learn from them. Then apply that to how you practise law. The more diverse your experience, the more you will have to draw from in your interactions with your clients, your opponents, or in court. You must be able to engage with different people – it is the nature of the profession, it is life, and it

will help you develop both socially and professionally.

You know nothing, embrace it! I realise that this is a controversial statement, given that you just spent at least four years at university, but you are here to be trained and to **learn**. If you are open to it, you will learn not only from your own experiences, but also from how others do things and what works best in each instance.

As you learn each component of legal practice, understand that everything fits together. You may think that collating documents and preparing the trial bundle is a menial task, but it is not. Learn how to do this right. A missing page in a trial bundle may end up causing a postponement of a trial, with serious consequences. A badly constructed and sloppy trial bundle may frustrate a busy judge and prejudice your matter. Everything matters in law.

None of us are perfect and sometimes mistakes can happen. This is where character is important. Own up to it quickly so that it can be fixed before it snowballs. Do not assume anything – if you are unsure, ask.

Be **consistent**. One of the key differences between a good amateur sports person and a professional is consistency. Consistency is driven by passion. Passion means to go the extra mile to deliver the result.

You will often be put under severe time constraints to deliver work. That is because the profession operates under time constraints (and likely not because your principal is cruel). You must learn to work under pressure and still consistently deliver top-drawer work.

Your work is a reflection of your passion, and the effort, enthusiasm and efficiency with which you achieved it. These qualities, consistently applied, make you reliable, and a reliable candidate attorney (and lawyer) is a trusted one.

Finally, I encourage you to **persevere** – embrace every opportunity and enjoy the journey. The next two years may contain many make-it or break-it moments, and success will be the product of hard work, consistency and passion. Having said this, it is an honourable profession where your efforts are rewarded by the gratitude of those who relied on you in their hour of need. ♦

*Bridger is an Associate with Hogan Lovells (South Africa).*



Bridger

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PRACTICAL PRACTICE GUIDE

# Top students 2021

MYRLE VANDERSTRAETEN



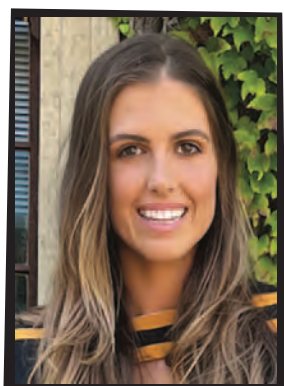
## University of Cape Town

### Chelsea Richard

I am currently studying an LLM in Commercial Law at UCT as well as working as a teaching assistant in the UCT Private Law Department. Next semester I will be heading to Stockholm University as part of the Exchange Programme.

My medium-term goals at the moment are to move to the UK after my LLM, complete the legal conversion course there, and secure a training contract at an international commercial law firm. The future is uncertain but, in the long-term, I hope to specialise in a niche area of law that I am truly passionate about.

The most difficult aspect about completing my degree online was the loneliness that I experienced while studying from home. I feel like I missed out on the typical university experience and from building meaningful relationships with my peers and lecturers.



Chelsea Richard

The positive aspect of online learning is that it enabled me to be tremendously efficient with completing assignments and keeping up with the lecture content. I live in Noordhoek and so I saved a lot of time driving to and from campus during the week. I was able to use this time effectively to complete work and ultimately free up my weekends.

During the 2020 lockdown, I realised that I am much more capable than I ever imagined and can acclimatise swiftly to overcome unexpected challenges.

Apart from resilience and flexibility, I have also significantly advanced my technological skills. I think that this will stand me in good stead in the future considering the massive acceleration of technology in the legal sector.

My advice to current students is, your hard work and commitment will all be worth it.

I am a huge fan of cliché legal fiction books. I found the prescribed materials in my degree quite arduous to read and so as a break, I appreciated easy reads. Specifically, I enjoyed John Grisham's 'The Judge.'

### Justin Winchester

I am currently working at UCT as a Teaching Assistant in the Private Law department and as a Research Assistant in the Public Law department. In September, however, I leave for the University of Oxford where I will be pursuing my Masters in Law as a Rhodes Scholar.

Dear Student,

Congratulations, I have been advised by your alma mater that you were one of the top final year LLB graduates of 2021. This is a major accomplishment, made even more special as it was achieved during a very uncertain period globally. The Quarter 2 issue of *without prejudice* will carry the traditional Top Law Graduates feature. May I ask you to complete the questions below?

- Are you currently:
  - serving articles – if so with which firm? or
  - serving pupillage – if so with which chambers? or
  - studying further – if so what and where? or
  - none of the above – if so what are you doing?
- Do you have medium- and long-term plans, if so, what are they?
- What was the most difficult aspect of completing your studies during the two COVID-years?
- What was surprisingly easy?
- What did you learn about yourself during the 2020 lockdown that most surprised you?
- What will you take away from the uncertain times of your final two years at university that you believe will stand you in good stead for the rest of your career?
- In one short sentence what advice do you have for current final year LLB students?
- Many people escaped the stresses of the virus by watching series and reading books, often those that provided light relief or humour. What book or series did you most enjoy and in a few words, why?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards

Myrle

In the medium term, I plan to qualify as an attorney. In the longer term, I hope to work as an advocate with the aspiration of eventually being appointed as a judge. And at all times, I hope to contribute meaningfully to legal academia.

The most difficult part of completing my degree during the pandemic was feeling distanced from others. Without spending time with friends to ground me or chatting to classmates about coursework, I often felt like I was struggling on my own.

What was surprisingly easy, however, was getting help from lecturers. I was taken aback by the willingness of my lecturers to consult about the material and to entertain my (often tangential and purely for-my-own-interest) questions.

I never believed people who said that 'You can always make time for the things you really want to do', but they were right. During lockdown, I found myself better able to balance participation in extra-curriculars, maintain healthy relationships, and do exercise all alongside student leadership, part-time jobs, and academic commitments. The pandemic made me reconsider my priorities and taught me to



Justin Winchester



make time for things that make me happy.

An important realisation for me was learning just how interconnected the world's problems are. We need big-picture, inter-disciplinary, and socially aware thinkers (including lawyers) to make the world a more just place, and my career will be more meaningful keeping that in mind.

To current final years: aim high because you are far more capable than you're letting yourself believe.

As an escape from stress, I thoroughly enjoyed Tsitsi Dangarembga's 'Nervous Conditions'. It explores topics like racism, patriarchy and classism in subtle yet explicit ways; much like how they unfold in our everyday lives.

### Kelsey Levieux

I am currently serving articles at Webber Wentzel.

I am really loving being a candidate attorney and I am keeping an open mind in terms of long-term plans – in my dreams I get to become some kind of a lawyer (yet to be determined) as well as a beekeeper.

The most challenging part of studying during the pandemic was being away from my classmates – quite often I'd feel like I was falling behind only to find out later that everyone else was just as lost as I was.



Kelsey Levieux

It was surprisingly easy to fall back into the routine of going to the library every day when things started opening up.

The thing that I learnt about myself during 2020 that surprised me most was that I'd fallen into a lot of routines that felt safe – and that I could be a lot happier by venturing beyond my comfort zones. Sometimes you need to make mistakes even when you know they

are going to be mistakes. Better that than being paralysed by a fear of failure.

I think what I'll take away from the COVID years is that everything is a lot easier and more fun when you don't try to take it all on alone.

My advice for current final years is to apply for everything you can – everyone I know, no matter how impressive they are, has had to face rejection in one form or another – you just need one thing to stick right now, you have so much time to figure out the rest.

The book I enjoyed the most during the pandemic (a book I read as a child and always come back to) is 'The Princess Bride' by William Goldman (the movie is great too – but the book is better).

### Zoë Austen

I am currently serving articles with Werksmans Attorneys in their Sandton office.

My plan is to complete my articles and continue to learn and grow into what I hope is a well-rounded legal practitioner, so that I can proceed to contribute meaningfully to the legal field. A part-time LLM in commercial law is also an enticing prospect at some stage.

Personally, I learn best when engaging with peers. Bouncing ideas off one another during the 15-minute breaks outside Kramer LT1 challenged me to

substantiate why I hold particular viewpoints regarding the law, which deepened my knowledge. Naturally, these opportunities weren't as readily available during the pandemic and that loss was a difficult adjustment. I missed being able to form better friendships with my class that I would have taken with me far beyond my university days, but I am eternally grateful for the wonderful and brilliant friends that I did make during my time at UCT.

Although it certainly isn't my favourite mode of teaching or learning, I was amazed by the new prospect of hosting large groups of people for lessons via Zoom and Teams. I benefited from this development as I could host more students when tutoring corporations and contract law during my final year.

In circumstances where I was isolated from the rest of the world, and where I had previously doubted my capabilities, I learnt that I could actually rely on myself and trust in my own academic skills and abilities, which certainly boosted my self-assuredness.

As all learning was done online, I was forced to plan my own timetable and have the discipline to stick to it. This has translated into managing my time better and has allowed me to prioritise more efficiently, which is a hugely beneficial skill in the workplace.

To students – Don't take yourself too seriously. Except Civil Procedure – take that seriously.

As clichéd as a law student reading a John Grisham novel is, I did genuinely enjoy reading his novel, 'The Firm', last year. It's fun to delve into the sensationalised dramas of the law!



Zoë Austen



University of the  
Free State

### Alizwa Madebe

I am serving my articles at Webber Wentzel.

I take life one step at a time, so my current goals are to get through my articles, pass my Board exams and get admitted as an Attorney of the High Court.

I found the abundance of time quite challenging to deal with. My life prior to COVID was well structured, I always had an obligation to fulfill at a specified period. However, I never really had to consciously determine my own schedule because the time in which I had to act on my commitments was mostly predetermined. For example, it was not up to me to decide when netball practice would take place, I just knew I should be at the courts at the time given on the relevant days. When I finally had nothing but time on my hands, I did not know how to effectively



Alizwa Madebe

use it. I procrastinated more than ever forgetting that time eventually runs out. I eventually had to teach myself discipline which was so difficult to do.

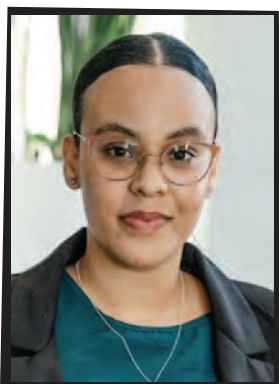
I was most surprised by how easy it was for universities and businesses to acclimatise to providing their services remotely. Working from home should have been implemented sooner in many industries!

I was most surprised by my lack of time-management skills.

In the past two years of my degree, I definitely learnt how to draw a line between working hard and straining myself. In the field that I am in, it is easy to get consumed by your job so that is something I hope to avoid now that I know how to be kinder to myself.

My advice to students is that it's true marks are not the be-all end-all, but they definitely allow you to knock on bigger doors than you would have otherwise been exposed to so put effort into them.

I did not read a single book. I binged on series like everybody else, and I did a lot of activities I had been putting off for quite a while, such as paintballing and hiking.



Deonay Scholtz

### Deonay Scholtz

I am serving my Articles of Clerkship at Phatshoane Henney Attorneys, Bloemfontein.

Medium-term plans: I would like to be an Admitted Attorney of the High Court of South Africa within the next two years.

Long-term plans: Knowing where I want to be within 10 years is not an easy task, but I plan to gain as much practical experience as possible to become a specialist in my field of expertise. I also plan to commence postgraduate study (academia), which is where my passion ultimately lies.

I found it difficult to find a routine and study method that was suitable for the level of difficulty and standard of online assessments. Managing my time was definitely easier, which is something that I previously struggled with.

I discovered that I actually liked doing research. First-year-me would not agree.

When COVID-19 hit, we had to adjust to a completely unfamiliar method of study and this caused fear and chaos. I learnt that, in life, one cannot be stagnant in your current circumstances. Every day comes with its own challenges and uncertainties, and you must be able to respond and adjust accordingly.

I would say to students: stay positive and work hard. You are almost at the finish line!

With all the reading that law students are required to do, there was honestly no time to read books (other than the prescribed course material, of course). Luckily I enjoyed reading academic material for my mini-thesis. I did, however, spoil myself with a few seasons of Grey's Anatomy.

### Jessica Jaeschke

I am working in Germany, saving up to do my LLM in International Commercial Law in the Netherlands. I have been accepted by two universities and am still deciding where I am going to go.

My medium-term plan is to achieve my LLM *summa cum laude*.

The most difficult aspect of the lockdown was having to get accustomed to everything moving to an online platform. The easiest aspect was that we had more free time because there was less travelling to and from campus.

I was surprised about how I was able to adapt to the new circumstances not only within my academic life but within all spheres of my life.

My last two years at university taught me how to truly become independent. I am now able to work under immense pressure by myself without having to constantly rely on somebody else.

My advice for students is to be as hardworking as you can be without forgetting to enjoy it.

I enjoyed 'The Client' by John Grisham. It kept me on my toes and I could not put it down.

### Marius Redelinghuys

I am employed as a Senior Policy Officer at Emergency Management Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. My primary responsibility includes delivering the Victorian State Government's commitment to a particular legislative review emanating from an inquiry by the Inspector General for Emergency Management.

In the medium- to long-term I am pursuing legal admission in the Australian State of Victoria, which requires an assessment of my qualification and completing additional bridging modules. Beyond that I intend to, and hope to, continue working in legal policy in the Victorian Public Service.

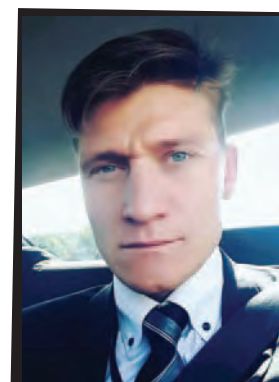
I completed my LLB via e-learning, and therefore the impact of COVID was negligible. I was already used to online learning arrangements. While the lack of written exams was a welcome reprieve, continuous assessment was far more demanding than I anticipated. Even though the volume of work was difficult, including juggling that with full-time employment, I think it prepared us better for a career in the profession. The profession does not consist of regularly scheduled tests, it requires continuous consultation, reading, and keeping abreast of developments. Having an academic and professional support network is therefore critical, including having access to proper resources.

The most difficult thing about the past two years was emigrating to Australia in the final semester of an LLB. Writing assignments and tests in supervised quarantine in a different time zone (eight and nine hours ahead), was a mammoth task. But I learnt through the experience that I am incredibly resilient, flexible, and adaptable.

My advice to a final year LLB student? Never underestimate the importance of your network. It will stand you in good stead in your studies and in your ca-



Jessica Jaeschke



Marius Redelinghuys



reer beyond. Knowing when to reach out is an incredibly important part of being a good legal scholar.

I am a massive 'Star Wars' nerd and I escaped the stresses of the various lockdowns by immersing myself in Star Wars novels. I have a huge collection, and highly recommend 'Star Wars: Dark Disciple.' Alternatively, escaping into the fantasy world of Middle Earth in any of Tolkien's novels is always recommended!

### Megan Kloppe

I am completing my LLM with specialisation in Mercantile Law at UFS, also looking forward to further studies in finance.

I have always been goal-oriented, somewhat fixated on running my own 'rat race'. The words 'I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I always knew the woman I wanted to be' rang most true when I registered for my Masters. For now, I am focused on adopting more flexible ways of doing my work and positively embracing constant change.

Honestly speaking, I enjoyed completing my studies at home. I am aware of the sufferings of people around the globe. Distance-learning gave me the opportunity to reflect on past experiences and it provided me the time I needed to make a decisive choice about my future career. The transition from on-campus studying to distance-learning was surprisingly easy.

An unexpected ability to slow down surprised me. Having been someone who viewed slowing down and taking downtime as a weakness, I'm surprised by the overflowing creativity that comes with allowing myself time to recharge and reset. Slowing down also enables me to take control of things within reach and to let go of external factors.

These past two years have taught me to remain calm during uncertain and challenging times. I have learnt to take cognisance of the present moment, and that I should not be hyper focused on the end result. This is an optimistic journey of self-discovery, and I will carry these lessons with me throughout my life and career.

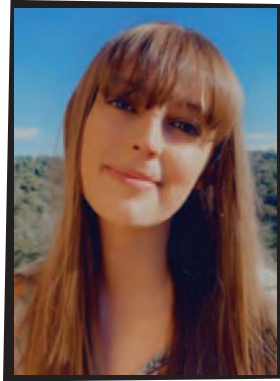
Students should know that it is important to embrace change with a positive mindset and to be supportive not only of others, but also yourself.

I do enjoy the light-hearted humour of social media recommended rom-com novels. However, I recommend Ali Smith's Seasonal Quarter series as I believe it provides a message of hope to those struggling during these seemingly fraught times.

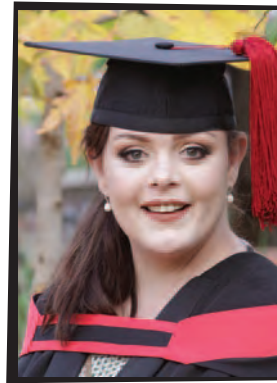
### Nicoleen Moorcroft

I am employed at the University of the Free State and responsible for planning, co-ordinating and managing specific institutional projects, initiatives and functions in the Office of the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, under the direction and leadership of the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Francis Petersen.

My immediate goals include incorporating my legal education into my employment environment in order to optimise the service I provide to all stakeholders. I am very interested in the accessibility and impact of law among students



Megan Kloppe



Nicoleen Moorcroft

in higher education and may embark on further research in this regard in future. The long-term dream would be to make law more accessible to those who need it most but are excluded from accessing it due to adverse circumstances or lack of finances.

What was the most difficult aspect of completing your studies during the two COVID-years? The fear of the unknown. Nothing like this pandemic had ever come our way, so it was uncharted territory. It really tested my

ability to remain focused on my academics instead of what was happening in every other aspect of our life. In addition to this, I was also employed and had a baby late in 2020. Having a new-born and working full time really tests your commitment to continue studying.

It was surprisingly easy to stay connected to other students, colleagues and lecturers despite the isolation caused by the pandemic. Additionally, being compelled to stay home limited everyday distractions, which made it easier to allocate specific times for academic work.

It came as a surprise that when I put my mind to something, I am capable of so much more than I imagined.

From the uncertain times of the final two years at university that I believe that my ability to work swiftly under immense pressure, my commitment to achieving the desired results and my effective time-management skills will stand me in good stead during my career.

My advice to current final year LLB students is, you are so close to conquering this mountain, you can do it!

I normally read biographies to relax, but I unexpectedly came across a Chuck Norris book and what a gem it turned out to be. I have not laughed so much in quite some time. It did a great job of lifting my mood when things got a bit tough.



## University of Johannesburg

### Gabriella Schafer

I am currently serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (CDH).

In terms of career, my medium term plans are to complete my articles, become admitted as an attorney and practise as an attorney. My long-term plans are to become an advocate and possibly a part-time lecturer.

I would say the most difficult aspect of completing my LLB during COVID was being disconnected from other students. I found it difficult to be isolated from my university friends as they were a big part of my academic support structure.

It was surprisingly easy to adjust to the online lectures.

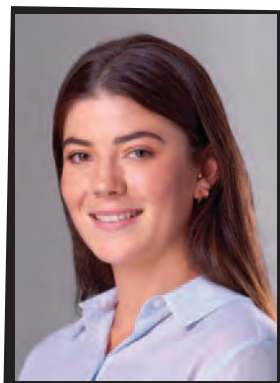
I found that I have the ability to self-motivate and hold myself accountable. I set goals for myself and took the necessary steps to achieve them. This showed

me that I am capable of much more than I had previously given myself credit for and I hope to always remember this going forward.

Self-discipline is key to success, additionally, sacrifice and hard work pays off in the end.

My advice to students is, study to remember- not just to pass.

I most enjoyed the book '12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos', by Jordan Peterson. I found this book to be a simple 'antidote to chaos'. During uncertain times like COVID, this book provided me with a structured approach to the difficulties of life.



*Gabriella Schafer*

### Keagan Hyslop

The questions made me actually reflect on the last two years. I am so proud to be a part of a group of students who overcame all these challenges. We had an in-person graduation ceremony yesterday, and you could just see how much it meant to all of us. And yes, I think that a kinder world would be a beautiful thing to see.

I am serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc

My life goals are to start a family, master a field of law, and transform the legal profession by combating the prevalence of burnout culture. So, just the usual.

Not seeing my friends and fellow students at campus was difficult. University is a journey that is better shared with others. We rely on each other to process the anxiety and stress – whether it is going out for lunch, studying together, or even just venting in the parking lot. We need these interactions with people who are experiencing the same thing we are. It helps us to realise that we are not alone in our struggles, nor in our victories.

Learning the work without face-to-face classes was surprisingly easy. The lecturers were very creative with how they delivered the material online, but we students also showed how capable we are at self-learning. Never underestimate a law student armed with a textbook and a desire to learn.

In my final year, I learnt that I am not a superhuman who can work 10-12 hour days, seven days a week, for the whole semester. Rest is just as important to success as hard work, and I regret that it took me five years to learn this.

I will take forward the confidence in my ability to adapt, be agile, and persevere in creative ways. COVID changed everything from how we were taught, to how we were tested, and to how we conducted ourselves students daily. Attending classes and understanding the work were no longer enough – we needed to read material ourselves and think critically. However, the fact I am writing this shows that the past two years has built up a resilience in law students, which will help us to overcome the obstacles in our lives.



*Keagan Hyslop*

To current students – define what happiness means for your life, and don't change it for the world.

My book of the year was 'The Wise Man's Fear' by Patrick Rothfuss. This is a beautiful book that remains close to my heart – it provided an escape to a world of fantasy and adventure when reality was full of chaos and uncertainty.

### Rual Grobler

I have always wanted to further my studies, so I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in International Commercial Law at the University of Johannesburg.

Ever since I started my journey in law, I had my heart set on finding challenging and fulfilling work. I have yet to sign with any firm, but my long-term plans include building a reputation as a dynamic and accomplished legal professional. Spearheading a few impactful cases would fit nicely into my aspirations. Most of all, I plan on having a rewarding and dynamic career one day in whatever form it may unfold.

Studying during the pandemic was challenging, but it is the uncertainty that gets to you. There was no pen on paper experience, no idea of what the next week of studies would hold. The more you stared into the screen, the more you found it staring back at you. A great challenge lay in the uncertainty of having a four hour exam during load-shedding, not knowing whether your battery would outlast the submission timer.

I found time to be a great ally. The lack of travel and isolation had the benefit that all your spare time could go into making those perfect final touches to your assignments.

The lockdown taught me that I could push my limits in ways I never could have imagined.

My advice for current students is, the work is never as much as it seems, but neither is the time. So make the most of the time you have, and as little of the burdens you perceive to be weighing on you. If you're waiting until the last minute to do something, then it only takes a minute to do... so get on with it. Success will follow.

I enjoyed 'Meditations' by Marcus Aurelius. Reading a Roman emperor detailing the pleasures you find in responsibility and hard work creates a comforting confidence which allows you to tackle the following day head on!



*Rual Grobler*



**University of  
KwaZulu-Natal**

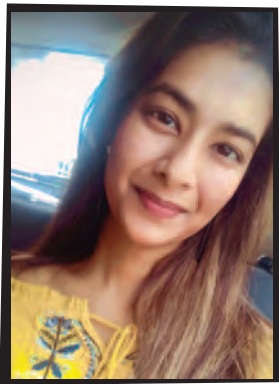
### Akira Rajnarain

I am currently enrolled for Practical Legal Training at the School for Legal Practice. Thereafter, I plan on writing my board examinations and securing articles to become a legal practitioner.

My medium-term goals are to complete my Practical Legal Training and to

pass my board examinations. My long-term goals are to become a successful legal practitioner and to make a name for myself in the legal fraternity. I plan to pursue my LLM at a later point.

The biggest challenge whilst studying during the two COVID years was finding a balance between studying and taking time for myself. I found it difficult to separate my studying time from leisure time because my home environment



**Akira Rajnarain**

became the primary space to attend online lectures and write assessments. As a result, I invested most of my time towards studying.

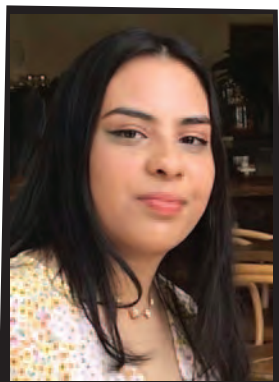
Motivating myself to continuously study was the part that came easily. I remained determined and encouraged to work persistently with the love and support of my family.

I learnt that I can accomplish anything I set my mind to as long as I believe in myself and I am willing to make sacrifices for the goals I want to achieve.

My final two years taught me that anything is achievable, despite challenges, when you have a good support system, and are willing to demonstrate resilience, hard work, and determination.

My advice to final year LLB students is to stay focused, forge forward, and persevere despite the many challenges that fourth year has in store. The journey is very rewarding once you reach the other end of the tunnel.

The book I most enjoyed was 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' by Khalid Hosseini. The way the author portrayed the struggles experienced by individuals, especially women during the Afghanistan war was heart-wrenching. The book illustrates women empowerment and liberation during a time where women lived in a predominantly patriarchal society and conveys the message that despite life's challenges, there is always hope when we choose to take a stance and fight for what we believe in.



**Annalise Thulapersad**

### **Annalise Thulapersad**

I am currently pursuing a Masters of Laws degree by research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

I seek to complete my Masters degree at the end of this year and begin my practical vocational training next year. Although I aim to pass my competency-based admission examinations and thereafter become an admitted attorney, I also strive to enter the field of academia.

My 20th birthday fell on the same date that South Africa first went into a national lockdown. Subsequently, the pandemic drastically impacted my life. Transitioning from contact lectures to online lectures was incredibly difficult. The detailed explanations that a lecturer provided in contact lectures did not translate in the same manner online due to the constrained time of having one online lecture per week for each module and the various technological disruptions associated with online learning.

Although the beginning of the pandemic was challenging, I was able to easily adapt to a routine of dedicating time each day to work on my modules.

My anxiety was at an extreme in 2020 due to the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic. However, I learnt that I am quite resilient and I was able to focus on completing my work despite the persistent distractions around me.

Completing the last two years of my degree online in the midst of a pandemic changed my work ethic. I became more disciplined with planning and prioritising my time. However, I also realised that taking time to rest contributed to a conducive environment for me to work effectively. I have continued to incorporate this work ethic as I work on my Masters dissertation.

My advice for current final year LLB students would be to plan your time effectively but remember that productivity also means choosing to rest.

Books are the perfect form of escapism for me. During the pandemic, I re-read my favourite fantasy series 'The Infernal Devices' by Cassandra Clare, set in a fictional version of Victorian London.

These books made numerous references to poetry and history and fuelled my already existing love for literature.



**Layla Shah**

### **Layla Shah**

I am currently serving articles at Bowmans.

My medium-term plans at the moment are just to make the most of my experience as a candidate attorney, pass my board exams and be admitted as an attorney.

The most difficult aspect of COVID for me was the isolation. The best part about the university experience is the memories you share with your friends. COVID took away my support system and a lot of the time I felt alone with all the stresses of university.

I found studying from home to be more convenient in a lot of ways because I no longer had to travel to campus, and I had more flexibility in my days. I liked being able to control my study schedule every day.

During the lockdown I had to deal with many difficult personal circumstances, and I think what surprised me the most was my resilience. I took quite a few knocks but still stood strong at the end of the day.

The pandemic if anything made us extremely adaptable. It forced us to be very organised and diligent. We didn't have constant lectures and completing the syllabus on time was entirely our responsibility. I learned to be more focused and developed a great work ethic because of this which will benefit me greatly throughout my career.

My advice for current students is to set your intentions and don't let anything derail you.

I'll be honest and say that I didn't read anything except textbooks and case law during the last two years – the life of a law student! I definitely was more inclined to watching series to unwind.

### **Shanice Naicker**

I am currently studying towards my Masters in Medical Law under the supervision of Professor Thaldar and Mr. Kimble, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.



**Shanice Naicker**

I plan on completing my Masters and thereafter I will pursue my articles.

I think the most difficult aspect was adjusting to full-time online learning. Especially, since I was used to seeing my friends and lecturers on a daily basis. However, it was easy to adjust to working from home for the past two years.

I will take away that even under difficult circumstances, I will persevere and continue to produce work of the highest standard. And I learnt that despite uncertain times and difficulties one must move forward and continue to work hard.

The best advice I can give is the following quote, which inspired me during the course of my degree: 'Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today' - Malcolm X.

The book I most enjoyed was 'The President is Missing' by James Patterson and Bill Clinton. It was a very well-written book that had a very captivating and thought-provoking plotline.

### Tariq Kajee

I am serving articles with White & Case in Sandton.

In the medium-term I aim to pass my board exams and get admitted and enrolled as a legal practitioner. Thereafter I would like to apply for a scholarship to study further in the UK. To travel and work towards obtaining a Master's degree would be a huge accomplishment for me.

Studying at home was a welcome relief at first but became monotonous over time and it was miserable not being able to spend time on campus with our friends. There was also the uncertainty and loss that the pandemic brought, which inevitably had an impact on our mental health.

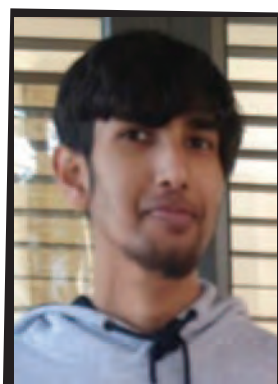
My parents, family, friends and lecturers played a massive part in keeping me distracted and cheerful throughout the pandemic. I took breaks when I needed to and my lecturers gave us such interesting readings and lively discussions – I probably learnt more in my final year than I did in any other one year.

I never liked speaking in class and thought it was intrusive to email lecturers. But ironically during the lockdown, I learnt how human everyone is, including me, and how important it is to engage with others and reach out generally.

My current rotation involves tight deadlines and plenty of teamwork, making proper planning and good communication invaluable skills that must be carried over from university.

To current students I would say, enjoy the time you spend at university and take care of your mental and physical health.

I enjoyed reading 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Brontë. I love the setting of the book and empathise deeply with Catherine and Heathcliff. 'House' was also a regular feature during exams and provided a welcome break from my coursework.

**Tariq Kajee**

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY

**Nelson Mandela**  
University

### Christian Botha

I am currently serving articles at Joubert Galpin Searle Attorneys in Gqeberha.

My medium-term goal is to acquire as much knowledge and experience as possible in preparation for when I am admitted. With that in mind, I see myself one day as an associate and then a director of a firm with a vast amount of expertise.

The most difficult aspect during the COVID-years was the lack of human interaction as well as the limitations placed on practical learning in my final years.

Surprisingly, time management, prioritising and organisation came to me a lot easier than I had expected.

During the Lockdown, I was reminded about how uncertain life is and how one needs to be adaptable to change and needs to strive to live every day to their fullest, accomplishing as much as possible, daily.

From my final two years I have taken away the fact that hard work and dedication truly pays off. Commitment to your work, mental health and physical health need to be at an equilibrium.

My advice to students – as Thomas Edison once said, 'the man who doesn't make up his mind to cultivate the habit of thinking misses the greatest pleasure in life'.

During 2020, the book that I most enjoyed was Stephen Covey's 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People'. During such uncertain times where I felt a lot less productive than I would have liked to be, the book kept me grounded to my ambitions and it fulfilled my desire for constant growth.

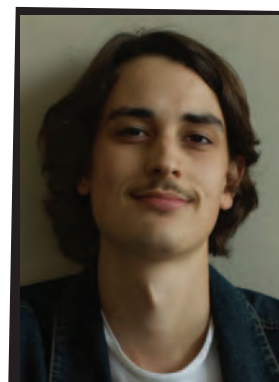
**Christian Botha**

### Estiaan King

I am not currently serving articles. I am taking the year off in Mauritius, trying to get to know myself and to gain perspective as to what exactly I want from my future. I am doing some courses remotely and doing odd jobs here and there to make money and gain some experience.

My plan is to head back to South Africa and secure articles for 2023. My long-term plan is to get admitted and work a job which allows me to work remotely which in turn will allow me to travel while working.

Definitely the inability to build on relationships with my fellow colleagues and our fantastic set of lecturers at Nelson Mandela University's Law Faculty was the most difficult aspect of completing my final two years during COVID. Due to the nature of online tests, I also found exam questions to be more practical but also quite complex and tricky.

**Estiaan King**

The transition from face-to-face classes to an absolute remote way of teaching and learning was very fluid. Notwithstanding a couple of teething problems, NMU's online system made the change as easy as possible.

I was surprised by my resilience and adaptability. I was surprised by how fast I was able to adapt to a whole different dynamic and environment and the challenges it presented.

Over the past two years we have seen the dawn of a digital approach to working and teaching and I think this will only develop over the coming years. I think with the rapid development of Artificial Intelligence, the legal fraternity may look very different in the next decades. This is something that really interests me and an avenue I want to explore during my tenure as a clerk and an attorney.

To current students – by working hard, it will allow you to play harder.

Only choosing one favourite book is an immensely difficult task. One of my favourite reads of the past couple of months was a novel titled *The Promise* by Damon Galgut. The South African novelist was awarded the Booker prize in 2021 for his book. The book addresses some really pressing issues of our country in very refreshing way which I really appreciated.



**Liso Zenani**

### Liso Zenani

I am currently serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr, at the Johannesburg office.

My immediate goal is to complete my articles and get admitted. More immediate still, I intend to learn as much as I can in each of the departments I will get to rotate through over the next several months. In the long run, I hope to pursue a Masters in banking and financial services regulatory law, gain more experience in practice and eventually join the

bar. Of course, serendipity plays a large role; the best lawyers I know are people who made the best of diverse opportunities as and when they arose. That is to say, I have an optimistically open mind about my career's long-term trajectory.

By far the hardest aspect of the last two years was adapting to completely online forms of assessment, where we suddenly had a lot more material to cover at very short time periods. What I found surprisingly easy and I valued, at least throughout last year, was the accessibility and willingness of our lecturers to engage us during and out of our Teams classes. As a predominantly verbal learner, I appreciated my lecturers' patience for the hypotheticals I constantly spun in class.

One of the surprising lessons I picked up is that it generally does no good to work and forget to live. In many ways, the pandemic reminded me just how valuable the chance of recreation and social connection with friends and loved ones can be. The advice I would offer anyone in their final year is this: Pace yourself, work as hard as you can and take sufficient rest: a well-rested mind is always far more efficient in the end than a heavily caffeinated one.

There are actually two books that I enjoyed the most during lockdown, and they rather sit on the heavier side of light: *'Louis D. Brandeis: A Life'* by Melvin I. Urofsky and *'Oliver Wendell Holmes: A Life in War, Law, and Ideas'* by Stephen Boudiansky, about two of the greatest lawyers who have ever lived.

### Simone Gratz

I am serving articles with Clark Laing Inc in Berea, East London. Clark Laing Inc is an incredible firm and I consider myself extremely blessed to have been placed with it. I plan to attend law school in 2021 with the end goal of being admitted.

The most difficult aspect of completing studies during the two COVID-years was the transition from face-to-face learning to online learning. This presented challenges in that there were many technical 'growing pains' that we had to endure before online learning could become natural to us as students.

Group work became surprisingly easy because we were able to connect with each other, regardless of our whereabouts. In addition, I found it much easier to participate in class and connect with the lecturers on the online platform because I was no longer 'lost in the crowd'.

What did I learn about myself during the 2020 lockdown that most surprised me? I was surprised to find that I can adapt to a changing environment quickly and effectively.

I learned that:

- It's okay to ask questions, even if they might seem silly to you, because someone else might be thinking the same thing;
- participation is recognised and rewarded; and
- mistakes are not permanent failures – they are opportunities for learning.

My advice for current final year LLB students is to get involved as much as you can, as early as you can – whether it be with the university or local firms in your area – practical experience is key to a smooth transition from studies to practice.

During COVID, I did not read much other than my Bible and, although I can't say I was humoured, I definitely felt the peace that came from reading the Word. I loved delving into my Bible studies because I was encouraged by the scriptures each day.

I have also found the 'Survivor's Guide for Candidate Attorneys' to be particularly helpful in navigating my new environment as a candidate attorney and highly recommend to those who wish to secure articles next year.



**Simone Gratz**



**Thia Fourie**

### Thia Fourie

I am currently serving my articles with BDLS Attorneys in Gqebehra.

In the medium term, my goal is to successfully complete my articles and get admitted as an attorney. I am not one who likes to dwell too much on what is yet to come, however some of my long-term plans include obtaining my LLM and possibly venturing into academia.

With COVID-19 came lots of change and uncertainty. The first few months of the pandemic hit me the hardest, particularly because I am a person who enjoys a sphere of collective learning and *in persona* engagement. The continuous isolation accompanied with the uncertainty of the way forward made it difficult, at times, to focus on my academic tasks at hand. I find it unfortunate that I missed out on various opportunities offered by the university to final year students such as the Law-Clinic. This made some classes less enjoyable due to the practical nature thereof.

I was forced to restructure my study routine and adopt a whole new approach. However, I enjoyed teaching myself the study content, and found it surprisingly easy to prioritise my work and maintain good time management.

The past two years taught me that I have so much more drive and self-discipline than I ever thought I would have. Despite all the challenges accompanied by the pandemic I still managed to adapt and meet the goals I set for myself.

I have learnt that I can complete tasks successfully by taking initiative and without the need of continuous guidance. I believe that this will stand me in good stead for the rest of my career.

To current students – your consistency and determination will determine your success – all those long nights will be worth it.

I enjoyed 'All Rise: A Judicial Memoir' by former Justice Dikgang Moseneke. From a legal stance I gained a better understanding of the path to our constitutional democracy and the values underlying our Constitution. To me personally, the book conveys a message of hope. A message that not even the worst situations last forever.



**North West University**

### Cherece Stoffberg

I am currently serving articles at Maree Attorneys in Pretoria.

With regards to medium-term plans, my goal is to successfully complete my articles and get admitted as an attorney. Thereafter, my ultimate long-term goal is to serve my pupillage and get admitted as an Advocate.

Studying during COVID-times was definitely a new and strange experience. Nobody had done anything like this before and nobody could really prepare us for what to expect. The most difficult aspect for me was adjusting from having contact-class and sit-down exams for two years, to suddenly having to complete the last two years online. There was no social/physical interaction between students and lecturers and students and fellow students.

For me, it was surprisingly easy to stay motivated and get up everyday and push myself to deliver my utmost best. Moreover, I imagined that the online learning system would pose a lot more challenges than it really did. The system used by the university was surprisingly easy to get used to.



Cherece Stoffberg

The most surprising thing I learned about myself was that my thoughts can be 'trained' to constantly see everything within a more positive than negative light. When I think about challenges and rather focus on the positive side thereto, everything is actually easier than it seems.

That, if I really focus on and set my mind to something, I can conquer any challenge presented, no matter how big or small. These will stand me in good stead in the future.

Students – Never give up – everything seems impossible until it is done!

I really enjoyed reading law-related books. The book by Jacques Steenkamp, 'The Griekwastad Murders' really kept me interested while simultaneously relaxing me and getting my mind off studies. I also enjoyed 'The Krugersdorp Cult Killings' written by Jana Steyn.



Eduard van der Westhuizen

### Eduard van der Westhuizen

I am pursuing a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management at the NWU Business School.

My medium-term plans are to complete my articles of clerkship at a law firm and build a successful career wherever I end up working. My long-term plans include specialising in legal fields that have received renewed attention due to current world events, such as health care law and intellectual property law. On a personal level, I plan on spending as much time as possible with loved ones and friends, especially my fiancé (soon to be wife).

The most difficult aspect was the amount of self-study that had to be done, the number of assessments and, of course, loadshedding.

Initially, the lack of physical class made it easy to schedule and plan my work to accommodate my mental and physical health.

I received renewed confirmation that I CAN do anything through Christ who gives me strength to rise above each obstacle I face.

Time management and deadline management are two aspects that I have tried to perfect as far as possible and which I believe will help me throughout the rest of my career.

My advice to students is that if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Plan everything. Life may not always go according to plan, but that's when you can change your plan instead of having your plans change you.

I enjoyed 'The 4-Hour Work Week' by Timothy Ferriss because it gave me new insight into restructuring my work around my life and not my life around my work. Though work may be important, you must remember that your sanity is more important.

### Heloïze Hattingh

I am currently serving my practical vocational training at Bruwer & Bruwer Attorneys in Klerksdorp.

My medium-term goal is to become an admitted attorney and add substantial value to my principal's firm as a balanced and confident junior attorney. My long-term goals are less specific because the pandemic taught me that one must live



**Heloize Haltingh**

in the moment and not look too far into the future. In the long-term I want to become an attorney renowned for having integrity and an expansive knowledge of the law.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during the COVID-19 pandemic was having to attend classes and participate in the online learning sphere by myself. There is a huge difference between sitting next to your friends in class and sitting by yourself, watching everyone joining and leaving a virtual

meeting. I missed the human interaction with my fellow students and I struggled to adapt to a study space without it. However, I found time management surprisingly easy. Even though I had extra chores at home which I would not have had in the campus residence and assignments increased the general workload of my studies, I managed to find time to relax.

What I learnt about myself in the pandemic that surprised me a lot was that I coped well even though I did not have everything 'figured out'. I believe that this lesson will also be a valuable one for the rest of my career. Life can change in an instant and you have to be willing and able to change with it.

During the lockdown I enjoyed the books by Nicolas Sparks because it reminded me that people need each other and that someday in the future we will again be able to enjoy each other's company like we did before.

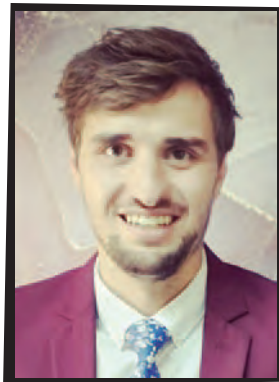
My advice to current final year students is 'volhard en hou moed'. This means to persist and to be courageous and at the end of the day you will be able to be proud of your accomplishments.

### Juandr  Judeel

I am currently serving a two-year term as Candidate Legal Practitioner at a well-established law firm called Hartman & Associates. I assist in all aspects of the firm's practice with a particular focus on litigation and collection matters.

As any other Candidate Legal Practitioner, my short-term goals are directed towards completing my two-year term, passing my boards exams and becoming an admitted Legal Practitioner. Knowing myself, I will most definitely continue to expand on my love for knowledge and foresee a potential involvement within the agricultural sector, whether it for business and/or leisure purposes. For now, I am very open-minded, absorbing what practise has to offer.

The main aspect I struggled with during the COVID transition was the fact that there were no set systems in place to accommodate the changes we have undergone. To overcome certain obstacles and/or struggles, you had to rely on email communication, which resulted in delayed responses. Further, as a highly sociable person, I immediately noted the absence of face-to-face interaction with my lecturers and peers. I had to adjust myself accordingly, but it taught me a great deal of patience and independence.

**Juandr  Judeel**

I was surprised by how accessible tests and assignments were. Study material was made available readily and we had no trouble completing the tasks at hand.

Probably the biggest lesson that I have learnt is that it is sometimes necessary to be isolated from one's environment, in order to reflect on the situation at hand. It also became quite apparent that adaptability is key in order to survive in our ever-changing society. Time management combined with the ability to procrastinate effectively and still get things done. Also, I have learnt to embrace change, as change brings new opportunities for growth.

My advice to LLB students is to be present and absorb every moment of your studies. It might sound clich d, but once the reality of a working life hits you, you will long to be back. Always strive for excellence, and most importantly read case law.

I was kept quite busy with vast amounts of reading material in order to complete the hefty research assignments. As such, I took every available moment and mastered my series binging abilities.

**Juhan Muller**

### Juhan Muller

I am currently serving articles at Tiaan Smuts Attorneys in Brooklyn, Pretoria.

My short term to medium plans for the future are to complete my articles and be admitted as an attorney, conveyancer and notary. My long-term plan is to start my own law firm once I am confident that I have gained sufficient experience to successfully run a law practice.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during 2020 and 2021 was staying motivated. It is easy to become discouraged and lazy when you are forced to stay at home and do not have a normal academic routine.

The easy aspect about completing my studies during the pandemic was being able to allocate more time to my studies since I was not involved with extracurricular activities (as was the case before the pandemic started).

During the 2020 lockdown, I learnt that I am an individual who is highly motivated to succeed and that I thrive under pressure. I found that Thomas Jefferson was correct when he said, 'I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it'.

I believe that my final two years of studies will stand me in good stead for the rest of my career because it taught me how to be self-disciplined and to find solutions to cope, and to succeed, in unexpected circumstances.

I would advise final year LLB students to sacrifice their holidays in order to gain practical experience in a law firm since this will give them a head start if they choose to serve articles.

The book that I most enjoyed during the pandemic, and during my lifetime, is the Bible. My faith has brought me to where I am today and the Bible is filled with incredible wisdom, not only spiritually, but for everyday life. Proverbs 16 verse 3 says that if you commit your work to the Lord, your plans will be established – I can attest to this.

### Marcelle Samons

I am currently a Candidate Attorney working at Adams & Adams.

Right now, I am primarily focused on making a success of the next two years as a Candidate Attorney.

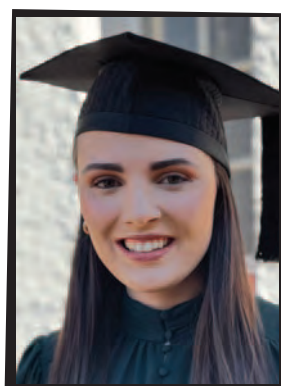
In retrospect, it is difficult to pinpoint one specific thing that I found particularly challenging. However, I think, the serious ambience of the pandemic was, in general, unfavourable for optimal learning and working. But the remote learning environment caused cold winter mornings to be substantially less challenging!

I learnt that I draw more energy from social interaction than I thought.

I will take with me the knowledge that success demands the courage and confidence to move forward, in the midst of uncertainty.

My advice to students is that whilst taking care of your goals, be sure to make the time to take care of yourself too.

Prior to the pandemic, I mainly preferred reading non-fiction. However, during 2021, I read a fictional series and amidst social isolation, I particularly enjoyed the brilliant wit of the characters.



Marcelle Samons

### Mari van der Walt

I am currently serving my articles at Burger Huyser Attorneys, at the Bedfordview branch.

My goals are to successfully complete my articles and thereafter establish myself as a successful attorney, specifically in the commercial law field.

The most difficult aspect of studying during the two COVID years was definitely the social aspect, everything was online, and thus all interaction with fellow students had to be by means of Zoom, MS Teams, or Whatsapp. Technology definitely made everything easier but human interaction was dearly missed.



Mari van der Walt

The easiest aspect for me while studying during the past two years was applying self-discipline and finding a routine, as I am a firm believer that having a structured day will always lead to a productive day.

During lockdown I learned that you cannot control everything, and you need to appreciate the little things in life that we easily take

for granted, like taking walks outside or visiting family and friends.

I believe that I will take the ability to adapt from the uncertain times of my final two years at university and apply it in my career as the legal field is consistently changing and accordingly one needs to adapt. You are also faced with various cases that require you to ensure the best outcome for a client and to ensure the best outcome you will need to change course sometimes.

My advice to final year LLB students would be to study hard as your marks are of utmost importance, but also to enjoy the last bit of student life.

One of the books that I enjoyed is 'The Beach House' by James Patterson, it was a suspenseful book that kept one intrigued and wanting to keep reading.

### Ruan Jacobs

I am currently serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc.

At the moment, I'm just focusing on making the most of each rotation and figuring out which area of law interests me the most.

I found the most difficult aspect of the last two years at university was the fact that I could not see friends and fellow students as much as I used to.

Studying online was, in many ways, much more comfortable than attending classes in person.

When listening to lectures, I concentrate much better by walking around in the dining room, bouncing a tennis ball against the walls and furniture, than sitting down in front of my laptop.

How to prioritise tasks and manage my time more effectively are the tools I will take with me in my career.

To students – go out with friends, do a lot of fun stuff, and sleep late every now and then – you won't have that luxury next year.

My favourite book was 'Dominion – the making of the Western mind' (by the English historian, Tom Holland). I found this book about Christianity's effect on the Western psyche immensely interesting; *The Guardian* review

pretty much sums it up: 'An absorbing survey of Christianity's subversive origins and enduring influence... filled with vivid portraits, gruesome deaths and moral debate.'



University of  
Pretoria

### Amy Pawson

I am currently serving my articles in the employment department at ENSafrica, Johannesburg. My medium-term goals include getting admitted as an attorney and then potentially enrolling for a Master's degree in labour law.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during COVID-19 was the transition to non-contact classes – we, as University of Pretoria students, were not accustomed to this form of teaching and learning. The challenges that virtual classes posed included a complete lack of social interaction and a completely different way of engaging with our module material. However, I enjoyed the flexibility of being able to watch recorded classes as opposed to having a set timetable. Furthermore, online learning provided more opportunities for self-study and greatly enhanced my legal research skills. On a lighter note, one of the easiest parts about online learning was



Amy Pawson

not having to wake up early and attend 07h30 classes on campus.

In terms of the lessons that I learnt during the 2020 lockdown, I realised the importance of self-motivation, self-discipline, as well being surrounded by a strong support system. In terms of what I learnt about myself, I should be more open to embrace new experiences and opportunities to develop new skills. For example, I accepted a part-time job which was within an industry that was completely foreign to me. The biggest lessons that I will take away from my final two years of university during COVID-19 is that (1) enhancing one's technological skills and abilities will only be beneficial for the future, and (2) a person has more resilience than he/she believes he/she has.

My advice for current final year LLB students is to find ways to make studying law enjoyable and also to obtain as much practical experience in the legal field as they possibly can, whether that be through vacation work or job shadowing at law firms.

A book I enjoyed reading during lockdown was 'All Rise' by former Chief Justice, Dikgang Moseneke, as it provided me with a new perspective on both the law and our judiciary.

### Christopher Williamson

I am completing my practical vocational training at Webber Wentzel (Sandton office) and I am currently in a Dispute Resolution rotation.

I am studying a postgraduate diploma in forensic auditing through the University of South Africa.

My medium-term plans are to successfully complete my postgraduate diploma within the prescribed time limit as well as to pass my admission exams. My long-term plan is to become a commercial crimes attorney.

I think the most difficult aspect of the two years of lockdown was not being able to interact with your professors or lecturers in a meaningful way.

I found working out, whether it was CrossFit or going to the gym, much easier because I had more time and flexibility.

I surprised myself with my interpersonal and leadership skills when I instinctively took it upon myself to assist friends, and other students who reached out to me, with virtual study sessions and reminding fellow students of assignment due dates. I wanted us all to collectively succeed during those difficult times.

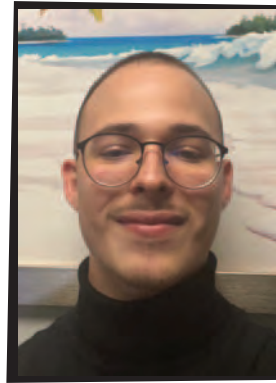
My advice is never to burn bridges, you never know when you might need someone.

Even though some say that theory and practise is vastly different, trust me, it really helps to know your theory in practice, especially procedural law.

I enjoyed reading 'The 48 Laws of Power' by Robert Greene. One of the laws that stuck with me is not to build fortresses to protect yourself as isolation is dangerous.

### Devin Wykerd

I am currently serving my articles at the Pretoria-based firm, Diale Mogashoa Attorneys.



Devin Wykerd

My current plans include: Completing my Masters in Law (still not entirely sure which field, but Tax, Administrative and Corporate Law seem quite enticing), becoming a conveyancer and achieving my ideal physique through exercising. I feel like I'm too young to have anything else planned out so I'm just going to go with the flow for now.

The most difficult aspect of completing the LLB during COVID was mental fatigue.

You become almost robotic in your daily routine, confined to the four corners of your room. There are days where you ask yourself, 'Is this really all worth it?' Going to the gym helped provide some respite and a change of scenery. Gym and the support structure around me – my parents, my partner and my friends – helped me overcome that fatigue.

Falling into a routine was easy. Despite how demotivating the monotony could be, I was able to remain focused...most of the time.

As a result of the 2020 lockdown, I learnt that I can excel in almost any given scenario as I have an innate drive to perform to the best of my abilities.

As clichéd as it sounds, I learnt that things truly do work out in the end. I was incredibly stressed about being unsigned in my final year, but a family friend, Adv Dikeledi Chabedi, told me that I'm far too young to be worrying so much about life, and that my hard work won't go unnoticed.

Students – learn to hold yourself accountable, even if no one is watching.

I did find comfort in reading, but not conventional books. I delved into manga, a form of Japanese comics that has become my favourite medium. I struggle to get attached to characters and stories in normal media but I find myself so intrigued by the stories of these fictional characters, drawn in black and white. The stories, worlds and illustrations created by some of the authors are breath-taking. My current favourite would have to be Jujutsu Kaisen.

### Robyn Culverwell

I am serving articles at Bowmans.

My medium term plan is to qualify as an attorney and practice in corporate law. Long term, I would like to do my LLM and LLD part time, probably in jurisprudence or legal philosophy. I would also like to get involved in more academic or non-profit work part time, preferably in the LGBTQ+/Feminist legal space.

What was the most difficult aspect of completing your studies during the two COVID-years? Everyone became less accessible. This was difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly, it became more difficult to speak to lecturers, peers and tutors about content-related questions or discussion points. Secondly, it was difficult to replace on-campus social interaction. Although virtual classes and activities took place, it was not quite the



Robyn Culverwell



Christopher Williamson



same, and studying felt very isolating without the campus bustle.

It was surprisingly easy to manage my own schedule. I thought I would struggle with the self-discipline to watch lectures and study on a regular and timely basis. Surprisingly, I really enjoyed the flexibility that virtual lectures gave me and I did not struggle to keep on track with my studies.

During lockdown I learnt that trying new things can be easy – I tried a lot of new hobbies in lockdown, and some stuck and some didn't. Regardless, I was surprised by my own ability to get started and attempt new things.

I improved my time-management skills during COVID. The flexibility of virtual lecturers allowed me to build up the discipline required to manage my time better. I am hoping this will give me an advantage when trying to manage working, building a career, studying for board exams, maintaining a social life and spending time on my hobbies.

In one short sentence my advice for students is – Focus on yourself and manage your own expectations! Everyone has good days and bad days, it is okay to rest and breathe, and you are not competing with anyone.

I read Tsitsi Dangarembga's 'Nervous Conditions', which I thoroughly enjoyed for its interesting perspective of a young girl growing up in post-colonial Africa. I also tend to stick to comfortable favourites – 'Harry Potter,' 'Lord of the Rings' and Diana Wynne Jones books. These childhood favourites comfort me in stressful times, and the fantasy genre helps me to escape daily stresses.

### Sasha Lordan

I am currently serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Incorporated in Sandton.

My medium-term plans are to become an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa and to be a valuable member of the team that I get retained in. My long-term plans are still to be determined – I will see where my passion takes me.

I was very lucky to have virtually everything I needed during the pandemic, including loving and supportive family and friends, so I can't complain much, but I certainly missed face-to-face lectures and being able to see my friends and lecturers on campus.

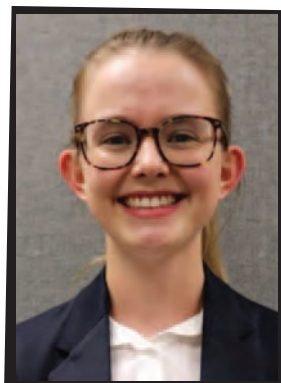
I found it surprisingly easy to work through material on my own and learnt to require little instruction, as I was terrible at listening to pre-recorded lectures.

Nothing really surprised me – I know myself really well – I thrive off interaction with others, so studying during lockdown was as lonely as I expected it to be.

I learnt that absolutely nothing is certain in life, do not seek to control the things that you cannot control. Also, hard work always pays off!

I have a quote for current students – 'Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of the hard work you already did' – Unknown.

I know it's super clichéd, but I have really been enjoying Julia Quinn's novels (the Bridgerton series) as they are a light-hearted, humorous read, and you can escape to the 1800s for a few hours.



Sasha Lordan



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### Christopher Tobaiwa

I received a training contract with Linklaters LLP at their London office, and I will be moving there later this year to start my Post-Graduate Diploma in law, followed by the Solicitor's Qualifying Exam.

In the medium term I intend to finish my conversion exams as well as board exams and serve my training contract. I hope to be retained and qualify as an associate at Linklaters. I also plan on continuing to build my platform called Careers Connect, which helps African students thrive in law school. In the long term I intend to grow in my career as a solicitor and become an industry expert. I also plan on becoming more entrepreneurial and being as impactful to my community as possible.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during the two COVID years was dealing with grief while studying. Most people lost someone important in their lives over the past two years. I was no exception, and it was quite difficult to regain focus after getting some bad news. On the flip side, what was surprisingly easy was adapting to the heavily computerised modus of learning. As someone who had been used to paper and ink, I found it easy to transition to computer-based learning.

During the 2020 lockdown I discovered how resilient I was. I stayed alone for the greater part of the year without any physical human interaction and somehow maintained a steady productivity flow.

The most important lesson I picked up in the uncertainty of the past two years is that things that are out of our control will remain so regardless of how much you worry. Embracing uncertainty is therefore pivotal.

I would like to encourage current final years to enjoy the final stretch. As much as it is important to secure those good grades remember that you are living through a time you looked forward to at some point.

During the pandemic I often read books to relax. My favourite pick remains 'The 5am club' by Robin Sharma. I enjoyed it because it combines vital lessons with excellent story telling.



Christopher Tobaiwa

### Francis Makkink

I am currently serving articles at Norton Rose Fulbright, Durban office.

I am invested in pursuing ICT law and eventually space law. I hope to open up my own practice in the future with a focus on innovation and sustainability, particularly in relation to technology, renewable energy and conservation.



Francis Makkink

One of the most challenging aspects of online learning was the uncertainty the pandemic presented, particularly in the first few months – at one point it was uncertain whether we would complete the academic year. This was extremely disconcerting.

The uncertainty brought on by the pandemic also meant that I wasn't sure whether I would sign articles because many law firms had closed, at least temporarily.

I was extremely fortunate to have been interviewed by Norton Rose Fulbright at Rhodes University's Market Day – many law firms scheduled to appear had cancelled. A few days later, the University shut down and the country went into its first lockdown.

I don't think anything can be classified as 'easy' in the Rhodes LLB degree. However, the shift from face-to-face to online was easier than expected, largely due to the Rhodes Law Department's commitment to quality education and completing the academic year.

What did you learn about yourself during the 2020 lockdown that most surprised you?

During lockdown I learnt to cope with uncertainty and I came to realise that some things in life simply cannot be controlled and the best way to deal with that is to trust a tried and tested process.

There are two main things that my final two years at university taught me: 1) Trust the process; 2) Adversity need not be an adversary, more often than not it can be one's greatest ally.

In my experience, I found that there were three essential ingredients to success so to current students I would say: work smart (without distraction), trust the process (bearing in mind one's method is never full proof) and always sleep 7-9 hours (this increases cognitive performance and is vastly more effective than Red Bull).

I re-read 'Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World' by Cal Newport. The reason I read this book is that it helped refine my studying process during the migration to online learning and renewed my confidence in my studying methodology. I highly recommend this book for anyone wanting to improve their studying skills – working without distraction is becoming a scarce skill.

### Hugh Harnett

I was teaching Tax in the CA Accounting Stream in the Accounting Department at Rhodes before I jumped ship and did the LLB. I'm 42 and an Accountant.

I am now studying towards an LLM at Rhodes. After my LLM I hope to secure articles or pupillage and eventually practise.

Having given up my previous employment to pursue the LLB the initial uncertainty of what would happen if classes were simply cancelled, weighed heavily on me. During the first 'heavy' lockdown, getting into a routine was challenging, but not insurmountable.

It was surprisingly easy to engage with the LLB curriculum. To their credit, my lecturers adjusted quickly to the demands of online teaching, at no point from a content perspective did I



Hugh Harnett

feel short-changed. I cannot in any way fault the delivery and quality of the online lectures I received. The issue re tech... The university was very proactive in sending us data and organising laptops for those who did not have one already. The hardware and data side of things was sorted fairly quickly once it was evident that we weren't returning anytime soon. To be honest, one did not need to be that tech-savvy to follow the courses. Of course, my classmates may not agree!

During the 2020 lockdown I was most surprised to find that my ability to deal with seemingly never-ending uncertainty, especially in 2020. However, being locked down with a bread machine did me no favours!

My take away from the uncertain times of my final two years at university that I believe will stand me in good stead for the rest of my career is that I developed an ability to adjust quickly and effectively to changing circumstances.

My advice to current students, do not leave for tomorrow what you can get done today.

I would have to say that I escaped the stresses of uncertainty during 2020 and 2021 watching series. They provided a much-needed distraction from what was a very depressing news cycle. 'The Office' (US version) was my salvation!



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## Stellenbosch University

### Emma Watson

I am currently serving articles at Andrew Miller & Associates, a boutique law firm in Johannesburg. My current plans for the future focus mainly on completing articles, being admitted as an attorney, and learning as much as I possibly can. Additionally, I would like to complete a Masters and possibly a Doctorate in the future.

I believe that the most difficult aspect of completing my studies during the pandemic was the constant uncertainty which surrounded all aspects of life.

You were never sure if you were going to class that specific day or if your exams would be moved online with little notice. This was extremely stressful, and I will admit that I never fully adapted to this uncertainty.

The easiest part of the pandemic was that I found online classes worked for me. I know some people had trouble not having in person classes, but I found that I rather enjoyed online teaching.

The 2020 lockdown surprisingly showed me how much of an introvert I am. I always believed that I was an extrovert since I excel in most social situations, however, being with my family and my dogs was not a struggle at all.

Even though I did quite like quarantine, there were some tough moments and I believe that the resilience and persistence that I gained from the last two years will aid me in years to come.

My advice to final year LLB students is to remember that studying isn't everything, so continue working hard, but also have fun and live your life.



Emma Watson

I am an avid reader so I read many books during the past two years. I believe that my favourite books during this time were the 'All Souls Trilogy' by Deborah Harkness, as it allowed me to escape reality and immerse myself in a whole new world.

### Estelle Hislop

I am doing my Masters in commercial law in preparation for my articles at ENS in 2023.

My medium plans are to complete my articles at ENS, practise for two years and then complete my year of pupillage. I aim to be qualified as an advocate by 2030.

Studying online was one of the hardest things I have ever done. Online tests really placed me at a disadvantage as my strengths have always been the ability to retain information, write speedily and write a LOT. In other words, online examinations stole every advantage I had ever had. This was coupled with the constant stress of COVID which was compounded by the reality of having already lost my father to illness.

It was surprisingly easy to re-enter my family life after having lived alone for two years. In fact, the lockdown period granted our family the unprecedented chance to reconnect and grow close. If nothing else, I am grateful for that.

I learnt a lot about my mental health and was able to address some issues I had not bothered to acknowledge until lockdown forced me to take stock.

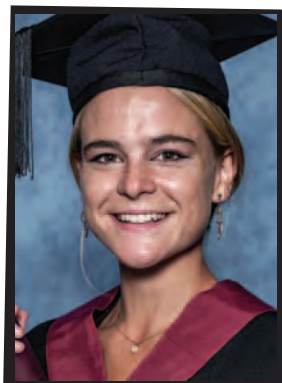
I will take away the simple phrase that **life is worthwhile**. I managed to work myself into an absolute tizzy in my third year after a series of academic failures and severe struggles with PTSD and related mental health issues. My recourse in the face of this adversary was to fling myself into work and narrow my focus to the single goal of academic redemption. In doing so, I utterly lost perspective, forgot to take stock, and ultimately lost an entire year in a black-hole of stress. I am not proud of this year, but on reflection it was a much-needed reminder of my undeserved privilege and my obligation to think beyond short term difficulties, extricate myself from my petty worries and **make life worthwhile**.

Remember that this year is not a means to an end... This is not a 'processing' year. This is your life. Make it count.

I threw myself into fantasy last year, reading everything from Patric Rothfuss (objectively the best series I have ever come across!) to the entire game of thrones series. I also discovered some obscure series like the 'Fall of Kings' and reread some old favourites like 'Hitchhikers Guide' and 'Catch-22.' I cannot say which book was my favourite as each novel served me differently at the time of reading. But in net, I gravitated towards wild fantasy to escape the absolute chaos and uncertainty of the pandemic and insert myself in an utterly 'other' world.

### Hugo Uys

I am currently pursuing my LLM (by thesis) at Stellenbosch University, under the supervision of Prof Henk Botha.



Estelle Hislop

My medium-term plan is to obtain my LLM, as well as my Honours in Philosophy. My long-term plans are to aid in the development of animal law as a systematic field of law, and to promote its teaching within law schools across the country.

Having to create and maintain new forms of (online) community was the most difficult aspect of lockdown.

Perhaps not easy, but positive, was the unexpected freedom to decide your own working hours and pace.

Lockdown forced us all to seriously reflect on, and reconsider, our priorities. What I came to learn is that, although personal fortitude is important, there come times when you are only as strong as your support structure. 'It takes a village', and when your academics/career falls out from under you, it is the people around you who will catch you or drop you. Today, I am therefore much more intentional in my relationships.



Hugo Uys

Prior to COVID, I struggled with adaptability and knew that it was a trait that I still had to cultivate. And what better teacher than truly unprecedented times! Completing my studies, in addition to leading various teams (such as the Responsa Meridiana Undergrad Law Journal and the SU Student Court), at a time when

no-one knew what the next week or month looked like, gave me no choice but to practise resilience and adaptability. I believe I have come to appreciate the value of preparation, without being overly attached to a specific idea of what should happen next. Hope for the best, prepare for the worst, but expect nothing.

To students – it feels difficult because it is difficult; be kind to yourself.

'No-One Is Talking About This' by Patricia Lockwood. A heart-breaking, yet funny, and incisive work of autofiction looking at what it means to have grown up with the internet, and what it means when real life threatens that escape.



Josh Da Costa

### Josh Da Costa

I am serving articles at Norton Rose Fulbright in Cape Town.

I plan to sit for the SQE after admission in order to become dual-qualified in South Africa and England and Wales, thereby enabling me to practise both locally and in the UK. Thereafter, I would love to write for a specialised LLM sometime in the not-so-distant future at prestigious university in the UK.

My biggest challenge was mental health. I found that continuously working from home made it incredibly difficult to switch-off and have time away from the books, which led to prolonged periods of 'social isolation' in order to keep on top of the never-ending stream of work.

I found that maintaining a schedule was surprisingly easy; working from home with recorded lectures meant having the ability to work to your own clock and in your own time.



I am incredibly noise sensitive. I frustratingly learnt that using earplugs together with industrial noise cancelling headphones while studying is still not enough to drown out the sound of my mom watching Law and Order on TV.

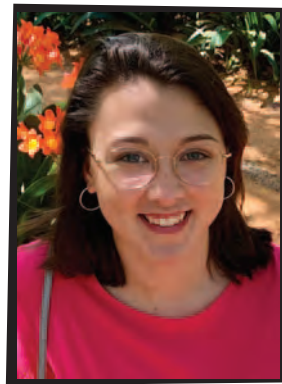
Grit is a word that means many different things to many different people but to me it means playing your hand even when your chips are down. It may not look pretty, and it may not be plain sailing, but with some courage and resolve, it will get done. This will stand me in good stead in the future.

I would say to students do not underestimate the power of consistency and perseverance; six months of hardcore focus, discipline and dedication can put you five years ahead in life.

I thoroughly enjoyed 'The Alchemist' by Paulo Coelho. It is a story of actively pursuing your dreams and following your heart which can be summed up in my favourite quote from the book: 'when you really want something in life, the whole universe conspires in helping you to achieve it'.

### Suzanne Wüst

I am currently taking the year to pursue a variety of interests, including completing a diploma in Interior Design. In May I will attend the School for Legal Practice in Cape Town, to better prepare for articles. I also hope to get some traveling done towards the end of the year.



Suzanne Wüst

I do not have detailed medium-term plans, but I am in the process of applying for articles in and around Cape Town, where I hope to become an admitted attorney, practising law for the foreseeable future.

The most challenging part of completing my studies during COVID was the isolation. I did not have the same casual day to day interactions with my friends and I could not just quickly ask the lecturer a question after class. We also had a big research assignment and the library's COVID logistics were exhausting!

I got used to the online lectures pretty quickly, and because it was recorded, my notes were much more comprehensive. And I really enjoyed all the 'bonus time' I could spend with my family, while also studying.

I was surprised by my grit and resilience that helped me to finish my studies successfully, despite lockdown and all that came with it.

My takeaway from studying during such uncertain times is that at the end of the day you do what is necessary to succeed, even if the circumstances feel almost surreal. Being adaptable like that will serve me well in my career where things are often outside of your control.

My advice to LLB students is to pick those electives you find genuinely interesting or those which are taught by inspiring lecturers, not necessarily the ones you think you will need to succeed.

I really enjoyed 'A Gentleman in Moscow' by Amor Towles. It is beautifully written, and the characters are so eccentric and lovable. It is set in Moscow in the early 20th century, so you get a good dose of history with the compelling storyline!

## University of the Western Cape

### Ayancka Adams

I am currently taking a gap year with the intention of pursuing personal growth and independence. This time away from my academics will provide the opportunity to discover a career path well suited to my character and purpose. I will also be completing my practical legal training at UCT.

My medium-term plans are to complete my practical vocational training at a law firm from which bright and passionate lawyers bloom. After completing my articles, I wish to advance into a position that not only supports the continuation of professional development but one which also allows me to serve a Godly purpose in the legal field. Future plans also include a furtherance of legal expertise and knowledge through masters and doctorate degrees.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during the pandemic was the ever-present appreciation of an abundance of time, which made it easier to become lost and distracted by other activities.

Things that made these uncertain times easier was my perseverance and dedication to working hard and succeeding. The pandemic forced a state of self-motivation and as such I did not lose sight of my passion for law.

During the lockdown I retained my determination to deliver high quality work and maintain academic excellence.

As I reflect on my final years of university during the pandemic, I realise that these uncertain times taught everyone a valuable lesson, be that time management or virtual communication, but most importantly the virtue of endurance, persistence and tenacity. As a result of this elevation of mentality I have no doubt that I will be a formidable force to be reckoned with in my career.

Always remember that you are stronger than you think and regardless of what life throws at you, do not drown, but persevere.

To escape the stresses of lockdown the novel which stands out most is 'The Diary of a Nobody', a satirical piece on ordinary life by George Grossmith and Weedon Grossmith. This novel emphasises how life should not be taken too seriously. Hence instead of getting lost in the depression and anxiety the pandemic brings, I focused on the positive things in life.

### Daniel Hertog

I am currently reading towards an LL.M. in Mineral & Petroleum Law at UCT.

My medium-term plans include completing my Ph.D. in Mineral & Petroleum Law and perhaps lecturing while doing so, or commencing articles depending on which opportunity presents itself first. My long-term plans are to go into practice, specialise in and make a valuable contribution to this area of law.



Ayancka Adams



Daniel Hertog

The most difficult aspect of completing studies during the two COVID-years was not having the extensive interaction and engagement one experiences during face-to-face lectures. However, structure, discipline and balance came naturally during these years.

I learnt that we easily adapt when we are forced to. The things I have learnt over the past two years that I believe will be of value during my career are that structure, discipline, balance and teamwork are attributes which will enable me to thrive in any situation.

My advice to final year students would be to embrace any opportunity you have to work in a team and manage your time well.

### Marivyn- Blaire Tchoula Tchokonte

I am currently pursuing my LLM in Multilevel and Local Government at the Dullah Omar Institute, UWC. I am also a Graduate Lecturing Assistant for the module Corporate Law. Within the first two months of doing my LLM, I have successfully published my first article in the Local Government Bulletin titled: Court tells the City of Cape Town to exhaust intergovernmental dispute resolution mechanisms.

Once I complete my LLM, I hope to pursue articles of clerkship at the best law firm, aiming to expand my understanding of the various areas of practice. My long-term goal is to positively influence and be at the forefront of leading legal developments that seek to challenge how we think about the law. I would like to continue publishing articles that stimulate discussion amongst scholars and practitioners. In addition, I hope to influence young leaders to make meaningful contributions to society by being active citizens.

The most difficult aspect of the pandemic was staying connected with peers and lecturers virtually. When you spend most of your time isolated without face-to-face interaction, it is easy to disconnect from the outside world especially when you are not getting the same magnitude of support you would ordinarily have gotten before the pandemic.

Adapting to COVID-19 was surprisingly easy for me as I quickly adjusted to the new normal, especially with more time in my hands to juggle several tasks.

The pandemic has taught me how resilient and creative I am. Despite facing adversity, I managed to excel, reaching the top of my class, graduating summa cum laude and excelling in my extracurricular commitments. I also got creative with my time by learning how to sew and bake.

What I will always take away is that I can achieve the goals I set for myself and surpass all odds.

My biggest advice to a current final year law student is to never doubt your abilities and to not stop until you outdo yourself.

The best way I escaped the stresses of the virus was through journaling and indulging in the best series ever, 'The Handmaid's Tale' (based on the novel by Margaret Atwood).

### Tasreeq Ferreira

I am doing an internship at the Equal Education Law Centre (EELC) based in Khayelitsha. I will be commencing with my articles in 2023 at Werksmans Attor-

neys in the Cape Town office.

My medium-term goal is to get admitted as an Attorney. My long-term goals include but they are not limited to doing my Masters, becoming a Partner at a firm, and to lecture as a means of sharing my knowledge with others.

The most difficult aspect of completing my studies during COVID was transitioning to a different teaching style. As a student, I enjoyed engaging in class, but COVID unfortunately limited the latter which made it difficult at first.

It was easy managing my own time. I was able to be more flexible with my schedule.

During the 2020 lockdown, I learnt that I was able to adjust to different situations and still do well. For example, adapting to a new method of learning and still performing well academically.

During COVID, I had to be more disciplined and manage my time effectively. I was able to do so hence I passed my LLB *Summa Cum Laude*. The discipline and time management skills will definitely assist me in my legal career. In addition, I had to face challenges during my final two years at university, but I persevered. One should be able to persevere and be dedicated in the legal fraternity. Having been able to do so in my last two years will assist me in overcoming challenges in my legal career.

I would advise final year law students not to be too hard on themselves, remember that slow progress is still progress, be more than just a student number and, that they should not forget to pray.

The book that I enjoyed the most is titled 'Good Morning, Mr. Mandela: A Memoir' by Zelda La Grange. The book taught me that we should learn to forgive, treat everyone with respect and to practise what we preach.

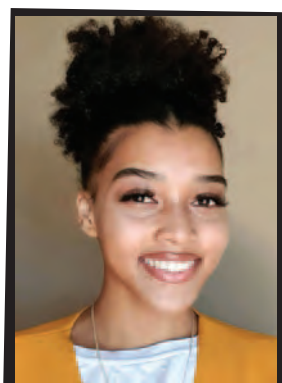
### Zaahirah America

I am blessed to be serving my articles in the Dispute Resolution Department of ENSafrica. My passion for law, particularly dispute resolution, has grown with the endless support, expertise and commitment to excellence of my firm.

I believe my future is open to endless possibilities. I intend to complete my articles and be admitted as an attorney and an associate at ENSafrica, specialising in Dispute Resolution. As a qualified Rough Diamond Evaluator and Candidate Fellow of the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation, I want to venture into the diamond industry to strengthen African diamond trade and economies. I plan on travelling the world, living purposefully and intentionally.

Completing my studies during the COVID pandemic/lockdown was challenging due to having contracted COVID-19. Constantly sitting behind a screen because of rigorous tests and a hectic exam schedule exacerbated my sustained fatigue and severe migraines. It was the biggest challenge in my studies. With resilience, prayer and strategy aligned with goals, I still attained third position on the Dean's List. Retrospectively, it surprisingly serves as a lesson and reminder of my courageous commitment to do what must be done to the best of my abilities – come what may.

Adjusting to online learning through strategic, effective study methods was



Marivyn- Blaire Tchoula Tchokonte



Tasreeq Ferreira



Zaahirah America

surprisingly easy and something I enjoyed doing – even in my free time!

My LLB studies taught me that prayer on all your actions, consistent hard work and courageous resilience makes the (seemingly) impossible, possible! I believe this to be a way of life that will stand me in good stead for the rest of my career.

With high goals set and tough academic years ahead in achieving them, I committed myself to solely listening to recitations of the Holy Quran and Islamic lectures for stress relief and enjoyment. As a Muslim it gave me a sense of hope, faith and peace in whichever state I found myself regardless of obstacles endured; it kept me focused and committed to self-improvement.

To all final year LLB students: your wellbeing is imperative, your efforts will pay off – Keep on pushing and you **will** reap the rewards of all your sacrifices.



## University of the Witwatersrand

### Amelia Warren

I am currently serving articles at ENS Africa – I am in the Banking and Finance department in Johannesburg.

At the moment I am just focusing on completing my articles, and getting as much experience as possible! I'm not sure what my plans are after that.

I think the hardest part of completing my LLB during COVID was the adjustment from normal studying to online studying – I found online lectures difficult to engage with. However, it was easy being at home all the time – I'm naturally quite introverted, so I found this aspect relaxing for the most part.

What did you learn about myself during the 2020 lockdown that most surprised me? I'm terrible at home exercise.

I think being able to learn virtually has been very helpful. At the moment, I am undergoing practical vocational training online – and I think being able to learn from anywhere in the world is an exciting and dynamic skill.

I would probably say my advice for current final year LLB students is – read the cases.

The book I most enjoyed last year was 'Hamnet' by Maggie O'Farrell. It was a beautiful story – and I was so compelled that I almost missed the start of one of my exams because I was finishing it.

### Matthew Pepin

I am very privileged to be serving my articles at one of the formidable Big 5 Firms – Werksmans Attorneys.

I don't think that it is prudent to hypothesise where the legal fraternity will take me so early on in my career. All I can say is that obtaining an LLM and subsequent LL.D is something I have my eyes set on. The copious opportunities available to me in my firm and in this fraternity make it difficult to decide on



Matthew Pepin

what sector of law I want to venture into. I plan on spending my two years of articles growing and figuring out where my legal calling lies.

The isolation was by far the most difficult and limiting part of my studies during COVID. The loneliness and deafening silence was unbelievably difficult to adjust to. Not being able to engage naturally and meaningfully with colleagues and lecturers is the biggest downfall of obtaining a degree during the pan-

demic. It's only when the engagement is gone do you realise how important that truly was.

The work load was more bearable than I anticipated. Without all the travel and wasted 'wander around time', you can get so much more done.

I was surprised that I could win the battle against the voice of self-doubt in my head.

It is impossible for me to pin down to one specific thing what I learnt during the two COVID years that will stand me in good stead in the future. Perhaps one of the most impactful lessons was that no matter the uncertainty and the seemingly insurmountable fear, having the right people around you will get you through even the darkest of days. No-one is ever truly alone, even when the world shuts down.

My advice to current students is read everything you can get your hands on.

The book I most enjoyed – 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse' – Charlie Mackesy. No matter what type of day you're having, you can turn to any page of this short book and be inspired by advice you never knew you needed for the day.

### Megan King

I am currently working and volunteering in various non-profit roles with an eye toward pursuing an LLM in the coming year. If the past two years have taught me anything it's that I have no idea where I will be in the long term! However, I

hope I will be wrestling with interesting legal issues at the confluence of innovation and the law and doing my small part for the greater good.

In my experience, the pandemic had a surprising mix of difficulties and opportunities. I longed for discussion with my classmates and lecturers, but I learned to sit with my thoughts and listen to my intuition. The turmoil of lockdown left me balancing work, study, and family obligations all in the same tiny space, but it also gave me treasured mo-



Megan King

ments with far-flung family. I learnt that I am more adaptable than I had thought, and that resilience is in all of us. I was undeniably fortunate to have a desk to work at and internet access – unlike many of my classmates. I remain in awe of those who had much tougher difficulties to overcome.



The pandemic taught me that nothing is certain, that loved ones are invaluable, and about the ephemeral nature of life. During my career, the difficulties I overcame, lessons I learned, and skills I developed during this time will always be something I can fall back on.

My advice for current final year LLB students (to quote my local park bench) is 'you are a speck of dust in a tick of time'. Your degree is important, your grades are important, but remember to enjoy your tick of time and do the best you can with it. In other words, breathe out and give yourself a break now and then.

As if I hadn't had enough of dystopia, the books I most enjoyed during the pandemic were Margaret Atwood's 'Oryx and Crake' series. I love her wit and uncanny ability to stretch reality just the right amount, to make the unbelievable wholly believable, and make us question the world we live in.

### Tiffany Alves

I am serving articles at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc (CDH), in Sandton.

Currently, I am focused on completing articles and getting admitted. Following that, my medium-term goals would include pursuing a career in Corporate & Commercial or Banking & Finance, with a particular focus on mining law. During that time, I hope to complete my Masters degree within one of the two fields of practice. I have, however, always been open-minded about the path that my career might take, and so I hope that clerking at the Constitutional

Court and practising internationally will play a part in my longer-term career goals.

The most difficult aspect of the past two years was having to adapt to remote learning, as it resulted in a lack of human interaction. What I found surprisingly easy, however, was how effortless it was for peers to come together and help each other. So, despite having to sit through the final two years of my LLB alone, it was not a lonely experience. Nonetheless, the uncertainty experienced during the past two years has definitely turned me into a more resilient and adaptable person.

The past two years taught me that no matter how difficult and busy life becomes, it is important to make time for yourself and for those that you love. The lack of human interaction during this time made me appreciate the company of others, and I learnt not to take that for granted. I also spent time recharging my batteries, and I found that there's nothing like binge-watching Netflix or reading a good book to aid in this regard. During this time, I enjoyed reading 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' and 'The Mountains Echoed' by Khaled Hosseini.

Finally, the advice I would offer to final year LLB students is to put your best foot forward but remember to do what is in your control. You don't want to burn yourself out before the start of your career.



Tiffany Alves

## Nationalnews



### Allen & Overy



Abigail Stander



Imraan Akoo



Katleho Ntahale



Kyle Pienaar



Mame Diara Mbaye

### Herbert Smith Freehills



Eustace Ndebele, Bonnie Diale, Rory Rubin, Funso Adebolajo and Semliki Addison

## Nationalnews



## Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr



Alex van Greuning



Claudia Grobler



Dean Tennant



Gabby Schafer



Gaby Wesson



Halalisani Xulu



Hlonelwa Lutuli



Jacques Erasmus



Jamie Oliver



Jenny Harwin



Kamogelo Mothibe



Karabo Nemudibisa



Keagan Hyslop



Liso Zenani



Luyolo Mfithi



Morris Netshipale



Mu'aaz Badat



Nishan Pillay



Oliver Marshall



Palesa Malolo



Parusha Chetty



Priscilla Brandt



Robin Henney



Ruan Jacobs



Sasha Lordan



Syllabus Mogashoa



Thato Makoaba



Tiffany Alves



**National**news



# Meet Webber Wentzel's 2022 Candidate Attorneys



**WEBBER WENTZEL**

in alliance with > **Linklaters**

*Top Row: Alizwa Madebe, Ané Lindeque, Bianca Nilsen, Christopher Williamson, Diyajal Ramrajh, Dominique James, Emily Elphick, Eugene Chaphi, Faatimah Jaffer, Hannah Milner and Hayley Warring.*

*Second Row: Imaan Sayed, Innocentia Magodi, Katlego Bulala, Kelsey Levieux, Kgotlagano Legobye, Letlotlo Mache, Lonwabo Mabona, Louiza Roy, Lusani Sadiki, Mali Ndwandwe and Mamello Senamela.*

*Third Row: Mariam Razak, Matt Williams, Maxene Mamogobo, Merosha Govender, Minenhle Shabalala, Navresh Tangur, Nitara Chandika, Nqobizwe Shongwe, Qasim Ganey, Reine Aldous and Robyn Moriarty.*

*Last Row: Sakiwe Canca, Sidrah Suliman, 36 Sonay Raghoonundan, Tamryn Klette, Thomas Greig, Tshagofatso Gouwe, Wesley January, William Kumwenda, Zakiyah Dockrat, Zanela Mahlalela and Zinhle Gebashe.*



## Nationalnews



## Lawtons Africa



Back: Tebogo Maunye, Nicholas de Decker, Bradley Frolick and Andile Mphahle. Front: Tshegofatso Malatji, Shannen Etter and Meagan Ruthman

## Garlicke &amp; Bousfield



Nkule Zuma

## NSDV



Reneilwe Ramolela

## Baker McKenzie



Front: Dyondzo Kwinika, Sihle Sibanyoni and Francis Mayebe. Back: Elissa Duku, Asandra Ogle, Jarrod Hartley, Clara Hansen and Nadia Hattingh

## Spoor &amp; Fisher



Charmaine Nyundu



Nishaat Slamdien



Thato Moloto



## National news



### Fairbridges Wertheim Becker



Kirshia Pillay



Nokulunga Bulu



Cape Town: Robinn Modau, Delan Dhaya and Vicky-Lee Willemse

### Warburton



Stuart Tredgold

### Bowmans



First Row: Siphumelele Jaca, Mokgadi Mamabolo, Noxolo Khohliso and Letlhogonolo Nthodi. Second Row: Milda Mojaepelo, Phetha Mchunu, Khuliso Thenga, Azraa Moyideen, Ari Chipkin, Karabo Mahlangu, Danielle Dallas, Kalenda Opai-Tetteh, Tandeka Masimla, Daniela Mech, and ashwi Pattini. Third Row: Elan Dekel, Robyn Culverwell, Ewan-Nize Gerber, Sephetha Mjja, Jaron Carter, Sizwe Mntambo, Ayanda Majola, Layla Shah, Matthew Baudewig, Megan Wakefield, Nambitha Bolani and Raisha Ramkhelawan



Cape Town: Grace Crocker, Jade Fairweather, Brigitte Westermeyer, Palesa Shabangu, Katlego Shirinda, Laurian Polkinghorne, Raiza Ballim, Natalia Mbatha and Nthato Padi



## Nationalnews



## Adams &amp; Adams



Front: Myles Kisten, Jamee Lee Boodoo, Michael Mncube, Hlumelo Sikwentu, Tshireletso Tihloe, Nombuyiselo Bhede, Tladi Mofubetsoana and Alten du Plessis. Back: Rose Dlamini, Refiloe Mpati, Marcelle Samons, Nomzomhle Kona, Gene Hlatswayo, Abrari Donkor, Vuyo Mxhonywa, Afika Mbeje, Dalen Mmako and Johannes Mlotshwa. Not in the picture: Annelisa Bansi, Sarah Suleman and Mandla Ngidi.

## Werksmans



Front: Kelopile Wessie; Raisah Mohamed; Matthew Pepin; Sinazo Magadlela; Benedict Ngoben; Zoe Austen; Chiara Ferri and Thulani Dlamini. Back: Siphosethu Zazela; Kwanele Diniso; Danelle Plaatjies; Mikhail Peer; Sabine Letellier; Brandon Starr; Karabo Kekana; Esna Mätschke; Luke Magerman; Marisha Krishna; Tiyana Ramchunder; Amogelang Magano and Ngwalemorwa Matsapola



## National news



### Norton Rose Fulbright

Johannesburg



Anitah Ndlhovu



Carly Lakin



Felix Le Roux



Gilad Katzav



Jessie Johaar



Julian Scholtz



Karabo Makwela



Lara Thom



Luke Schooling



Maano Manavhela



Masego Mogotsi



Mduduzi Sibiya



Michael McCarthy



Rory Scott



Shanese Booyesen



Thokola Zungu



Xina McBeath



Zara Amod Carim

Durban



Lebohang Mokoena



Lereshin Naicker



Francis Makkink



Saii Govender



Sanam Hannuman



Sarah-Jade McKillop



Tayiba Barnwell

Cape Town



Aqeelah Petersen



Ashley Honywill-Strachan



Josh Da Costa



## Nationalnews



## Fasken



Dawn Khumalo, Hadassah Laing, Sameer Osman, Caleb Mapatha, Vaschel Naidoo and Oraizia Adham

## Andersen



Koketso Molotsi



Siphesihle Ndelu

## VDMA



Aamena Mahomed



Hazel Jacobs

## Hogan Lovells

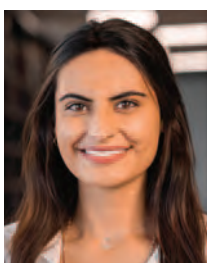


Christina Mlambo



Jean Nel

## Cox Yeats



Harshita Kapoor



Lloyd Mtshali



Gabriella Latham

## Cowan-Harper-Madikizela



Patience Kunene

## THE LAW FIRM DIRECTORY

# Is this the right firm for you?



### WHO

- ☎ 012 432 6043
- 😊 Zola Williams
- ✉ Zola.Williams@adams.africa
- ✉ PO Box 1014, Pretoria, 0001

Adams & Adams

### How to apply?

Law students apply by following the link on the firm's website <https://www.adams.africa/firm-overview/graduate-recruitment/>. The link takes them to the online application portal.

### What to send?

Students should complete their profile on the application portal. The profile serves as a CV, it must be accompanied by a motivational letter, matric/ senior certificate, full academic transcript and a copy of the applicant's identity document.

### CHECK

#### How to make sure Adams & Adams has received what is sent?

Through the portal students can track their applications at all stages of the recruitment process. The chat function on the portal allows the student and the recruiter to send each other messages throughout the recruitment process.

### What is Adams & Adams looking for?

We are looking for high calibre discerning candidates who are willing to work hard to fulfil their goals and maximise on the exposure and training they receive at the firm.

Candidates must demonstrate:

- Strong and consistent academic performance
- Good interpersonal, communication and problem-solving skills
- Self-motivation and leadership skills
- The foresight to anticipate things, composure under pressure, and must take responsibility for an outcome.

### WHAT

### EXPECT



WHO

- 010 597 9973
- Lebogang Mamabolo
- Lebogang.Mamabolo@AllenOvery.com
- 6th Floor, 90 Grayston Or, Sandown, Sandton, 2196

**ALLEN & OVERY**

CHECK

**Required Documentation:**

- CV
- Motivational letter
- Latest Academic Record
- Matric certificate
- Character references
- ID Copy

Apply on the website: Link provided below  
<https://www.allenoverly.com/en-gb/global/careers/south-africa>

**Acknowledgement of Receipt:**

Contact: Lebogang - 010 597 9973 or Nomvula - 010 597 9916  
 Or Email: GraduateRecruitment.SouthAfrica@AllenOvery.com

**What Allen & Overy is looking for:**

We look for a consistently strong academic performance throughout high school and university. All candidates must be studying for, or have completed an LLB Law degree at a South African university. We are open-minded and are interested in people who share that quality. Beyond this, we want to see evidence of a global mindset, teamwork, communication skills, planning and organisation, critical thinking, resilience, commercial awareness and commitment, both to a career in law and to Allen & Overy as a firm.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- +27 11 358 7700
- Thulisile Modika
- info@za.Andersen.com
- PO Box 3334, Houghton 2041, Johannesburg

**ANDERSEN®****Required Documentation:**

- Letter of Motivation
- A comprehensive CV
- Academic transcripts
- A copy of your ID document
- Any other supporting documentation

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

You will receive a notification email confirming receipt of your application. You can submit via the Careers section of our website at <https://za.andersen.com/careers>.

**What Anderson is looking for:**

We recruit and nurture exceptional talent and strive to build a collegial workplace that champions innovative thinking. Andersen in South Africa is a hybrid tax advisory and law firm that is part of the Andersen Global international association of legally separate, independent member firms, including 7,000 professionals in upwards of 256 locations worldwide, spanning more than 45 African countries.

Our vision is to build a firm that is not only known for providing world class legal services, but also offers a supportive, collaborative working environment where everyone is respected and has a voice. We encourage leadership, integrity, performance and progress to inform every aspect of our work.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- +27 11 911 4420
- Nontobeko Phale
- JOHGraduateRecruitment@bakermckenzie.com
- 1 Commerce Square, 39 Rivonia Road, Sandhurst, Sandton

**Baker McKenzie.****What to send:**

Applications can be made on our careers page:  
[www.bakermckenzie.com/en/careers](http://www.bakermckenzie.com/en/careers), create a profile and submit your application.

Your application must include your CV, a recent head and shoulder photo, a copy of your ID, your full academic records (including your Matric certificate) and a marked legal assignment.

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

The online portal will confirm receipt of your application and will be able to track progress on the portal. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for the vacation programme and interview. All queries to be sent to:  
 JOHGraduateRecruitment@bakermckenzie.com

**What Baker McKenzie is looking for:**

We are a law firm like no other. It's the attributes of our people that make us Baker McKenzie, and it's what we give them in return that makes this such an inspiring place to develop a career.

**Who we look for:**

- candidates currently enrolled for an LLB degree, to be completed prior to the commencement of the Practical Vocational Training
- strong academic profile
- team players
- excellent written and verbal communication skills
- ability to demonstrate initiative and pro-activity
- highest work standards with a strong service orientation - a "client first" culture.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- 011 669 9000
- Bohlaile Paile:
- Graduate Recruitment & Development Manager
- Kasheer Singh: Graduate Recruitment Manager
- Reatile Molefe: Graduate Recruitment Administrator
- graduates@bowmanslaw.com
- PO Box 785812, Sandton, 2146

**BOWMANS**  
THE VALUE OF KNOWING**What to send:**

Applications must be submitted online. The graduate recruitment team and selected partners of the firm will screen your application and assess your eligibility. Log onto <https://www.bowmanslaw.com/careers/graduate-opportunities> to view the process and the requirements.

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

The application portal confirms receipt by sending you a notification to your dashboard and email address. Should you have further questions, you can contact us through the above mediums.

**What Bowmans is looking for:**

We look for students that are studying towards B.Com Law; BA Law or LLB degrees. Our lawyers are team players. They are committed to excellence and deliver a high quality service. Most importantly, they possess a passion for the law. So, we look for well-rounded people with a high level of academic achievement and commercial awareness.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- 011 562 1000
- Boipelo Mathodlana –  
Graduate Programme Manager
- gradteam@cdhlegal.com
- Private Bag x40, Benmore, 2010



INCORPORATING  
KIETI LAW LLP, KENYA

## What to send:

- CV
- Motivational Letter
- Full Academic Transcript
- Matric Certificate
- ID

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

Applications are submitted via our graduate recruitment website,  
[www.apply4law.africa](http://www.apply4law.africa)

For additional queries, email [gradteam@cdhlegal.com](mailto:gradteam@cdhlegal.com)

## What Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr is looking for:

We look for all-rounders, ie law students with a good academic record, good communication skills (oral and written) and demonstrated interests in areas outside of their studies (sport, culture, university initiatives, community work etc). We value integrity, adaptability, resilience, a positive attitude and a commitment to contribute to a successful partnership.

WHAT

EXPECT

CHECK

WHO

- +27 11 048 3000
- Delene Swart
- info@chmlegal.co.za
- P O BOX 318  
GALLO MANOR 2052



## Required Documentation:

- CV
- Motivational letter
- University academic transcript
- Matric certificate
- ID, photograph
- Reference letters

## Acknowledgement of Receipt:

Contact our receptionist, Delene Swart on (011) 048 3000

## What Cowan-Harper-Madikizela is looking for:

We look for candidates with excellent academic records, well motivated and driven individuals who value the expertise and experience offered by the firm.

We do look at more than just academic records, these will assist, however we are interested in your strengths, your interests and want to see candidates who have a zeal for life and go above and beyond the standard requirements of a CA. Further studies and/or post graduate qualifications as well as achievements may be beneficial to applicant's.

WHAT

EXPECT

CHECK

WHO

- 031 536 8500
- Tania Kooverjey
- tkooverjey@coxyeats.co.za
- P O Box 913, UMHLANGA, 4320



## What to send:

Prospective applicants must apply via our online application system located on the "Careers" page of our website : [www.coxyeats.co.za](http://www.coxyeats.co.za) indicating the year from which they wish to be employed as a candidate attorney.

- The online application must include a short motivation
- Supporting documents must be uploaded as indicated which include:
  - A copy of your identity document
  - A copy of your matric certificate
  - A copy of all your academic transcripts
  - A copy of any relevant degree certificates
  - Reference letters

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

Online applicants will receive an email confirming that their application has been received. The applicant will receive a further email in due course to advise whether their application is under consideration or whether they have been unsuccessful.

## What Cox Yeats is looking for:

We are consistently rated as one of the top commercial law firms in the country and are progressively growing. We are looking for ambitious, hard-working and academically excellent candidates who have a commercial aptitude and a passion for law to ensure we are able to continue to provide our clients with service excellence.

WHAT

EXPECT

CHECK

WHO

- +27 11 269 7600
- Graduate Recruitment Team
- graduates@ENSafrica.com
- PO Box 783347, Sandton, 2146



## What to send:

ENSafrica is Africa's largest law firm.

We provide legal, tax, forensics and intellectual property advice to local and international corporate entities from our offices in Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda.

Our Practical Vocational Training provides the opportunity to work on cutting edge, complex legal matters under the tutelage of some of Africa's leading lawyers. We also provide:

- qualified life coaches and an employee wellness programme
- intra-department training and development
- a fully resourced library
- accredited in-house Practical Legal Training (PVT), access to past papers, revision classes
- competitive employee benefits schemes

Use the following link: <https://www.ensafrica.com/trainees/> and include the following documents

- cover letter
- curriculum vitae
- complete academic transcripts
- matric certificate
- identity document

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

We process a large number of applications. However, all applications receive a response on how we will proceed with the application. Should you wish to contact us regarding your application, please email us using the following email address: [graduates@ENSafrica.com](mailto:graduates@ENSafrica.com)

## What ENSafrica is looking for:

- accuracy: handling detailed information and being consistently attentive to details
- results orientation: Focus on achieving objectives and results
- cooperation: Working with others in order to effectively and contribute to a common objective
- planning and organisation: Systematically organising activities; setting time frames and priorities"

WHAT

EXPECT

CHECK

WHO

+27 21 405 7461  
Anette Rezelman,  
arezelman@fairbridges.co.za  
P.O. Box 536, Cape Town, 8000



## What to send:

- Cover/motivational letter,
- indicate whether you are seeking articles in CT or JHB in the email subject line
- a comprehensive CV,
- certified copy of ID or passport,
- certified copy of matric certificate or equivalent,
- academic transcripts of all completed and current degrees,
- certified copy of your degree certificate (where applicable),
- certificate of good conduct from the Registrar of the University you are attending,
- 2 dated character references or testimonials (not older than 6 months).

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

Contact Anette Rezelman, HR Manager +27 21 405 7461 or via email as above.

CHECK

## What Fairbridges is looking for:

We are looking for self-motivated applicants who have good interpersonal, leadership and communication skills. The candidates should have a well-rounded personality, very good problem solving skills with the ability to craft practical solutions. A good culture fit with the Firm is very important and the ability to interact with colleagues at all levels. A strong work ethic and the drive to add value wherever one can, are traits we value in the Firm. We look for candidates with the potential to grow and develop into mature and confident professionals.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

(010) 594 5002  
Nicola du Plessis  
nicola@fhinc.co.za



PO Box 55523  
Northlands  
2116  
South Africa

## What to send:

- CV
- Motivational Letter
- University Academic Transcript
- ID

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

All applications should be sent to the following email address:  
nicola@fhinc.co.za

CHECK

## What Falcon &amp; Hume is looking for:

Adaptable / dynamic personalities that will feel comfortable in a boutique firm environment, ability to work independently and under pressure.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

011 586 6201  
Carlen Brady  
cbrady@fasken.com  
P O Box 652057, Benmore, 2010



## What to send:

Motivational letter, CV, copy of ID, matric certificate and transcripts.

## Apply here:

<https://www.fasken.com/en/careers/lawstudents/johannesburg>

CHECK

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

Once you have submitted your application it will be logged onto our recruitment database for review. Applicants may direct queries via email to cbrady@fasken.com.

## What Fasken is looking for:

The position of a Candidate Attorney is role is reserved for those university graduates, with any undergraduate degree plus LLB, or a four-year LLB or an LLM, who are to undertake their articles, after which they will be deemed fit and proper to practise as an attorney in South Africa.

The ideal candidate has the potential to, with experience and development, display the following characteristics: i) the intellectual ability to analyse and solve problems ii) the ability to communicate effectively iii) the ability to develop their own knowledge base and that of the firm iv) the ability to deliver excellent client service v) well developed personal and organisational skills.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

+27 31 570 5300  
careers@gb.co.za  
P O Box 1219, Umhlanga Rocks, 4320, KZN



## Required Documentation:

Please go to [www.gb.co.za/More/Careers](http://www.gb.co.za/More/Careers) and complete the online form.

## Please submit:

- University transcripts
- Motivational cover letter
- CV
- References

## How to make sure we have received what is sent:

You will receive a notification from the website thanking you for your submission.

You will be contacted for an interview if you meet the selection committee's criteria for the position.

## What Garlicke &amp; Bousfield is looking for:

Garlicke & Bousfield Inc is a full spectrum law firm which offers its candidates training in many areas of law. We look for motivated, hard working team players who are committed to providing excellent service to our clients.

WHAT

EXPECT



WHO

- 011 052 6100  
 Emily Ntuli, Talent Sourcing Consultant  
 Kyle de Klerk, HR Coordinator  
 emily.ntuli@hoganlovells.com  
 140 West Road, Sandton, 2196

Hogan Lovells

WHAT

**What to send:**

Interested in applying for our Candidate Attorney (CA) Programme? Then send us the following documentation with your application:

- Cover/motivation letter and most recent CV (in 1 document)
- Certified Academic record/transcript (Applicants must have an overall academic average of 65% and higher)
- Certified Copy of your identity document or driver's license
- Certified Grade 12 (matric) results

Please note that non-South African applicants must have permanent residence or citizenship. We accept applications from the following disciplines from accredited South African institutes of higher learning: LLB, BCom Law, BA Law.

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Please direct applications and queries related to applications or our selection process to: johannesburgcareers@hoganlovells.com

**What Hogan Lovells is looking for:**

- **Strong academic and intellectual ability.** The work we do is complex.
- **Interest in business.** We are looking for people with a genuine interest in how businesses operate and the motivations behind people within them.
- **Ambition and motivation.** You should have clear reasons for your career choice.
- **Good communication** (written and spoken) and interpersonal skills.
- **Professional attitude.**
- **International outlook.** We hire professionals who are resilient and can adapt to new surroundings, respond to cultural nuances, tackle the unpredictable with confidence and take on responsibility.

EXPECT

WHO

- +27 10 612 0368  
 Pieter van der Merwe  
 info@vdmalaw.com  
 PostNet Suite 101, Private Bag x 32, Highveld Park 0169

VDM A  
VAN DER MERWE DORNING MAPONYA ASSOCIATES

WHAT

**What to send:**

- Motivational Letter
- Comprehensive CV
- Academic Transcript and Grade 12/ Matric Certificate
- Copy of Identity Document
- Copy of degree certificates

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to you via email. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited for an interview.

**What VDMA is looking for:**

VDMA is a focused boutique commercial law firm priding ourselves on the exceptional standard of our unique service offering. VDMA is independently recognized as one of the top tier law firms in South Africa and provides advice to clients from sectors such as financial services, food and agriculture, and renewable energy.

VDMA is looking for a motivated CA to join our team. The candidate must be able to possess good communication skills, be deadline driven and have a positive attitude towards the nature of the work.

We want to recruit and develop people who have the potential to become leading lawyers and contribute to our ongoing growth.

If you understand the power of the law, value integrity and are looking for a working environment where difference is respected, VDMA is the place for you.

EXPECT

WHO

- +27 (11) 523 6041  
 Kholeka Mtshali  
 graduaterecruitment@lawtonsafrika.com

LAWTONS AFRICA

WHAT

**What to send:**

- Motivation
- CV
- Full academic transcript
- Matric certificate
- ID copy

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

recruitment@lawtonsafrika.com

**What Lawtons Africa is looking for:**

We employ well-rounded individuals who display ambition, determination, perseverance, and the ability to interact with colleagues at all levels. A record of outstanding academic and leadership achievements is the starting point of a successful application to join Lawtons Africa.

EXPECT

WHO

- +27 82 776 3079  
 Layla Akhalwaya  
 Layla.Akhalwaya@nortonrosefulbright.com  
 Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa Inc  
 15 Alice Lane, Sandton

NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT

WHAT

**What to send:**

You will be required to register and complete an online application – [www.nortonrosefulbright.com/za/careers/](http://www.nortonrosefulbright.com/za/careers/)

The following documents need to be uploaded to your profile:

- Copy of your CV
- Copy of your identity document
- References
- Copy of your matric certificate
- Copy of your full academic transcript

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Once all is submitted, you will receive confirmation. Candidates will then be able to track the progress of their application on their dashboards, the system will alert each candidate as they reach the following milestones:

1. Application has been viewed by HR.
2. Application has been shortlisted.
3. Application has been progressed to a first round interview
3. Application has been progressed to a second round interview.
4. Invitation to participate in vacation program is extended.
5. Offer of articles is made.

Invitations to interviews and vacation work program will be sent to the applicant directly from our recruitment team. If a candidate does not progress beyond any particular milestone, we will communicate in writing.

**What Norton Rose Fulbright Inc is looking for:**

We are looking for candidates studying towards B.Com (Law), BA (Law) and LLB/BACCLLB degrees. Prospective CAs should be well-rounded individuals, with a proven record of academic excellence and display an eagerness to learn, absorb knowledge and flourish throughout their two years of articles. We consider those candidates who are passionate about the legal industry, who engage thoughtfully in current affairs, are forward thinking, driven, self-motivated and understand and want to part of the technological disruption within the legal industry. At Norton Rose Fulbright we are more than just lawyers.

EXPECT

WHO

- ☎ 012 676 1111  
 😊 Harold Mdlalose or  
 Zeenat Paruk  
 ✉ articles@spoor.com  
 ✉ PO Box 454, Pretoria, 0001

**spoor • fisher**  
 patents • trade marks • copyright

**What to send:**

- Cover Letter
- A comprehensive CV
- ID document
- Latest Academic Transcript
- Grade 12 / Matric certificate

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Applicants are required to apply through our on-line portal and will receive an automated response confirming receipt of their application.

**What Spoor & Fisher is looking for:**

As a boutique law firm focusing exclusively on the specialist field of Intellectual Property (IP) Law, we look for candidates who have a genuine and demonstrable interest in IP Law.

We particularly seek individuals who are academically consistent and have shown commitment to their studies. All-rounders who are able to think outside the box, possess a high achievement orientation and are willing to work hard in an intellectually stimulating and challenging environment will thrive at Spoor & Fisher.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- ☎ +27 11 447 6848  
 😊 Samantha Phillips  
 ✉ sam@warburtons.co.za  
 ✉ 53 Dudley Road, Parkwood, Johannesburg 2193



**Warburtons Attorneys Inc**  
 Environmental Law Specialists

**Required Documentation:**

1. Completed Bachelor of Laws (LLB);
2. Academic results of LLB;
3. Indicate whether you have completed Practical Law Training (PLT) or whether you plan to register for PLT (on a full-time or part-time basis);
4. Registered for/completed Master of Laws in Environmental Law (LLM) or related field and academic results if applicable;
5. Details of any practical experience in environmental, health & safety, energy or mining law; and
6. Valid driver's licence and own vehicle
7. Covid-19 Vaccination certificate

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Visit our website – [www.warburtons.co.za](http://www.warburtons.co.za) and subscribe to our newsletter.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list please email [admin@warburtons.co.za](mailto:admin@warburtons.co.za)

**What Warburtons is looking for:**

Warburtons Attorneys Inc. is now calling for applications for a candidate attorney position commencing in early 2023. We are looking for an enthusiastic and motivated law graduate who has a passion for and can demonstrate a special interest and experience in environmental law.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- ☎ 011 530 5000  
 😊 Siyurie Moodley  
 ✉ articles@webberwentzel.com  
 ✉ PO Box 61771, Marshalltown, Johannesburg, 2107

**WEBBER WENTZEL**  
 in alliance with > **Linklaters**

**What to send:**

To apply, visit the Early Careers page on our website Webber Wentzel Candidate Attorney Programme.

You will be required to complete an online application and upload the following documents:

- Curriculum vitae
- Academic transcript/s
- Matric certificate or equivalent
- Copy of your ID

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Once your application is submitted, you will receive a notification via email acknowledging your submission. To check on the status of your application, visit your profile on our application portal.

You may also follow up via the email: [articles@webberwentzel.com](mailto:articles@webberwentzel.com).

**What Webber Wentzel is looking for:**

Academic excellence, diligence, leadership, curiosity, a desire to learn, a generosity of spirit and the ability to adapt.

To apply you will need to meet the following minimum criteria:

- Be studying/have studied at a South African institution or have a SAQA certified equivalent international qualification.
- Expect to complete an LLB degree by January of the year the training contract commences.
- Be a South African citizen or permanent resident.

WHAT

EXPECT

WHO

- ☎ 011 535 8175  
 😊 **Shesnee Naidoo** –  
 Graduate Manager:  
 Recruitment & Development;  
**Lorraine Khatso** –  
 Graduate Recruitment Consultant  
 ✉ graduates@werksmans.com  
 ✉ Private Bag 10015, Sandton, 2146

**WERKSMANS**  
 ATTORNEYS

**What to send:**

Applications can be made through our website: [www.werksmans.com/graduates](http://www.werksmans.com/graduates).

In order to apply, law students will be required to create and complete an online profile, as well as upload a copy of their, ID, transcripts and matric certificate.

CHECK

**How to make sure we have received what is sent:**

Applicants may direct any queries via email to [graduates@werksmans.com](mailto:graduates@werksmans.com).

**What Werksmans is looking for:**

We welcome candidates who have a passion for life, learning, expertise and intellect. We seek students who are academically excellent and who also have interesting personalities and diverse interests. We want to know you beyond your lawyerly mask and for you to be free to explore your interests.

We accept applications from all law students i.e. BA Law, B Com Law, B Acc Law and LLB degrees. Students can apply to us from the second year of a LLB degree or in the final year of an undergraduate degree. If this is you, you can join us either on a Vacation Work Programme or as a Candidate Attorney. These programmes will open up a world of opportunity to work with some of the best legal minds in the country, for the highest calibre of clients.

WHAT

EXPECT