



## The Professional Diploma in Legal Practice - ###SITENAME###

# The Professional Diploma in Legal Practice

The Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) is an intensive 22-week program designed to prepare students for entry into legal practice in one or more of the jurisdictions of the region served by the University. The program was first offered in 1998 on an annual basis at the Laucala Campus, Suva, Fiji. It has now grown to the point where it has two intakes per year, in January and July.

The program has three distinct phases. During the first phase (14 weeks), students will undertake seven core modules, listed below. Although the program deals with the substantive rules relating to law in the context of legal practice, it is not the intention of the diploma to provide a comprehensive examination of these rules. The modules are a vehicle for the study of the skills, ethical and professional considerations, managerial issues and customary matters that underpin the practice of law in the jurisdictions of the South Pacific. This in-house component of the program will use simulated legal problems and scenarios as a basis for study. The participants will be allocated to a work group or "firm" that replicates, so far as possible, the environment in which legal practice takes place.

The second phase consists of a four-week period of work experience or 'placement' in a law office in private practice, industry, government or other suitable venue where the participant will gain supervised exposure to legal practice. The placements are undertaken in Fiji and the regional students go back to their home countries to do placement.

The third and final phase is a four week in house component at the Laucala campus in Suva, Fiji, involving an analysis of the placement, the further development of advocacy skills, and the completion of assessments.

The PDLP comprises eight (8) modules:

1. **LWD01 Criminal Litigation Skills and Practice** - Introduction to criminal litigation, what the Judge expects from a criminal advocate, the criminal prosecutor, rights of persons detained/arrested, police procedure, bail applications, drafting criminal charges, plea in mitigation, sentencing/alternatives to prison sentence, appealing a sentence, submissions, opinion writing, advocacy, court room practice, the defended trial process, elements of an offence, developing a case theory, examination in chief, cross examination, re-examination, opening speeches, no case to answer, closing speeches.
2. **LWD02 Civil Litigation Skills and Practice** - This module introduces the trainees to the litigation process starting with the preparation and filing of suits, the court rules on preparing papers and documents, the answer, and various defendant's pleadings such as the motion to set-aside default judgments, discovery, interrogatories, request for production of documents, and preparation of pre-trial and trial paperwork and documents.
3. **LWD03 Wills and Estates Skills and Practice** - In this module the trainees receive hands on experience in dealing with law relating to wills, probates, inheritance and property management including negotiation in respect of disputes over assets in a deceased's estate. They learn to take instructions from clients, draft wills and other testamentary documents and interpretation of clauses, and to draw documents for obtaining different types of grants in estates. Administration, winding up and accounting to the beneficiaries regarding estate matters is also dealt with.
4. **LWD04 Conveyancing Skills and Practice** - This module deals with transactions in buying, selling, transferring and leasing land and gives the trainees hands on experience in drawing all necessary documents for these transactions and handling client funds, managing client files, and dealing with appropriate registration authorities.
5. **LWD05 Business Law Skills and Practice** - This module introduces trainees to the practical applications of business law such as the formation of different business media (sole traders, partnerships and companies), drafting and interpreting of partnership agreement, Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association and related issues such as the fiduciary aspect of the stock exchange, consumer protection, bankruptcy, trust accounting and bills of exchange.
6. **LWD06 Family Law & Human Rights Skills & Practice** - This module deals with law relating to marriage, separation, custody and access, divorce matrimonial property, maintenance, domestic

application of international law and application orders. The second part of the module concentrates on human rights matters as it applies to Pacific region.

7. **LWD07 Ethics & Professionalism & Work Skills** - In this module trainees will learn about:
  - the rules of professional responsibility;
  - duties as individual lawyers to evaluate the appropriateness of their conduct in all professional situations;
  - how lawyers apply rules of professional conduct in various professional contexts;
8. **LWD08 Practice Placement** - In this module trainees spend four weeks on placement in a legal environment. Placements will take place in private legal practice, national or local government departments, in industry and commerce, the courts, law enforcement agencies or non-governmental organisations. Trainees are now responsible for finding his/her placement. During placement trainees handle client files under the supervision of a practicing lawyer who is required to oversee his/her work and write reports on them. This module exposes the trainees to real life practical legal issues.

[PDLP Curriculum Map](#)

## Assessment

Assessment is determined on a continuous basis that establishes whether a participant has achieved the requisite standard of competence expected of a newly admitted lawyer in key competence areas. To be awarded the PDLP students must demonstrate competency in all aspects of the program. The assessment will include oral presentations, written presentations, logs and portfolios of work, file management, attendance and general conduct. The written and oral presentations may include work that has been prepared or conducted under examination conditions.

## Admission requirements

Persons are eligible to be admitted to study for the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice if they have:

1. obtained the degree of Bachelor of Laws (LLB) of the University of the South Pacific, or
2. obtained from some other recognised tertiary institution a qualification deemed by the Senate or its delegate to be equivalent to the requirements set out in (1), or
3. obtained a professional qualification deemed by the Senate or its delegate to be equivalent to the requirements set out in (a) above, or
4. in exceptional cases, have demonstrated experience or achievement the Senate or its delegate deems sufficient.

- **Tuition Fees**, **Regional fee**: 8,145 FJD
- **Tuition Fees**, **Third country fee** 16,295 FJD
- **Tuition Fees**, **International fee** 20,370 FJD

## For general course enquiries

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## Application for Admission

Download an admission form here: [PDLP application form \[pdf\]](#)

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## 2016 ACADEMIC DATES

<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for late registration and adding of courses	15 January	
<b>Graduate School of Business</b> Orientation <i>(specific orientation dates will be communicated to students for different GSB Cohorts)</i>	16 - 29 January	
<b>PDLP:</b> Orientation and lectures commence	18 January	
<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for withdrawal of courses with no financial penalty <b>Trimester 1:</b> Last day to add courses	29 January	
<b>Trimester 1</b> lectures commence	30 January	
<b>PDLP:</b> Invoices available via SOLS <b>Trimester 1:</b> Invoices available via SOLS	01 February	
<b>Semester 1:</b> Orientation and Academic Advisory week; Registration continues.	1 - 5 February	14-18 March (30 week semester)
<b>Semester 1:</b> Lectures commence	8 February	21 March (30 week semester)
<b>Trimester 1:</b> Last day for withdrawal from trimester 1 courses with no financial penalty	12 February	
<b>Trimester 1:</b> Deadline for Payment of Trimester 1 fees	19 February	
<b>Trimester 1: Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full will be required to clear all outstanding fees and a Late Payment fee of FJ\$125.00 within the 1 <sup>st</sup> four (4) weeks.	20 February – 18 March	
<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for Payment of fees	26 February	
<b>Semester 1:</b> Deadline for adding of courses	TBA	
<b>Semester 1:</b> Deadline for withdrawal from courses with no financial penalty	TBA	
<b>Semester 1:</b> Deadline for transfer of Campus	18 March	
<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for all students to withdraw from courses that they do not wish to be assessed in <b>Trimester 1:</b> Last day for students to withdraw from trimester 2 courses they do not wish to be assessed for.	18 March	
<b>Trimester 1: Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full by this date will be liable for Late Payment fee as follows:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150.00 (next 4 weeks after 18 March).</li> <li>• \$200.00 thereafter.</li> </ul>	19 March	
<b>Semester 1: Deadline for payment of fees for all campuses</b>	TBA	
Laucala Campus Graduation	23 March	
<b>Mid-Semester Break: 29 March – 1st April</b>		
<b>Trimester 1:</b> Lectures end	15 April	
<b>Trimester 1:</b> Study week and Examination period	16 – 29 April	

Trimester 1: Examination period ends	29 April	
<b>TRIMESTER 1 BREAK: 30 APRIL – 14 MAY</b>		
Trimester 2: Last day to add courses	13 May	
Trimester 2: lectures commence and Invoices available via SOLS	16 May	
Semester 1: Last day of lectures PDLP: Last day for Placement Trimester 2: Last day for withdrawal from trimester 2 courses with no financial penalty	20 May	N/A for 30 wk sem
Semester 1: Study Week	21 May - 29 May	N/A for 30 wk sem
Semester 1: Deadline for students to withdraw from courses that they do not wish to be assessed in.	27 May	N/A for 30 wk sem
Semester 1: Examination Period	30 May – 10 June	N/A for 30 wk sem
Trimester 2: Deadline for Payment of trimester 2 fees	03 June	
Trimester 2: <b>Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full will be required to clear all outstanding fees and a Late Payment fee of FJ\$125.00 within the 1 <sup>st</sup> four (4) weeks.	04 June – 01 July	
PDLP: Last Day for Lectures	20 June	
<b>SEMESTER BREAK: 11 JUNE – 10 JULY</b>		
PDLP: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Intake Application deadline	30 June	
Trimester 2: Last day for students to withdraw from trimester 2 courses they do not wish to be assessed for.	01 July	
Trimester 2: <b>Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full by this date will be liable for Late Payment fee as follows:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150.00 (next 4 weeks after 01 July)</li> <li>• \$200.00 thereafter.</li> </ul>	02 July	
Semester 2: Academic Advisory week; Registration continues	4 – 8 July	N/A
PDLP: Deadline for late registration ( <b>adding of courses</b> )	08 July	
Semester 2: Lectures commence PDLP: Orientation and Lectures Commence	11 July	N/A
PDLP: Deadline for withdrawal of courses with no financial penalty	22 July	
PDLP Invoices available via SOLS	25 July	
Trimester 2: Lectures end	29 July	
Trimester 2: Study week and Examination period	30 July – 12 August	
Semester 2: Deadline for adding of courses	TBA	N/A
Semester 2: Deadline for withdrawal from courses with no financial penalty	TBA	N/A
<b>Deadline for payment of fees for all campuses</b>	TBA	

TRIMESTER 2 BREAK: 13 – 26 AUGUST	
<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for Payment of fees	19 August
Graduation (Laucala)	26 August
<b>Trimester 3:</b> Last day to add courses	26 August
<b>Trimester 3:</b> lectures commence and Invoices available via SOLS	29 August
Mid-Semester Break: 27 August – 4 September	
Graduation ( Solomons) <b>Trimester 3:</b> Last day for withdrawal from trimester 3 courses with no financial penalty	2 September
<b>PDLP:</b> Deadline for all students to withdraw from courses that they do not wish to be assessed in	09 September
<b>Trimester 3:</b> Deadline for Payment of trimester 3 fees	16 September
<b>Trimester 3: Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full will be required to clear all outstanding fees and a Late Payment fee of FJ\$125.00 within the 1 <sup>st</sup> four (4) weeks.	17 September – 14 October
<b>Trimester 3:</b> Last day for students to withdraw from trimester 3 courses they do not wish to be assessed for.	14 October
<b>Trimester 3: Late Payment of Fee Period:</b> Students who have not paid their fees in full by this date will be liable for Late Payment fee as follows:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150.00 (next 4 weeks after 14 October)</li> <li>• \$200.00 thereafter.</li> </ul>	15 October
<b>PDLP:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Intake Placement Commences	17 October
<b>Semester 2:</b> Last day of classes	21 October
<b>Semester 2:</b> Study Week	22 - 30 October
<b>Semester 2:</b> Deadline for students to withdraw from courses that they do not wish to be assessed in	28 October
<b>Semester 2 :</b> Examination Period	31 October – 11 November
<b>PDLP:</b> Last day for Placement <b>Trimester 3:</b> Lectures end	11 November
<b>Trimester 3:</b> Study week and Examination period	12 - 25 November
Graduation (Alafua) <b>Trimester 3:</b> Examination period ends	25 November
Graduation (Emalus)	2 December
<b>PDLP:</b> Last day for Lectures	09 December