



The legal profession in South Africa offers a variety of career possibilities to the person interested in this field.

The practising legal professions are divided into two branches, namely attorneys and advocates.

ATTORNEY

An attorney is the person with whom you first make contact when you seek legal advice or if you have legal problems. They offer clients services on all legal aspects, including company law, criminal law, taxation, conveyance (transfer of property transactions), estate planning and personal advice. Attorneys represent their clients in the Magistrate's Court and generally prepare cases for presentation by an advocate in the High Court. In a civil case the attorney assists a client with contracts, leases, wills, and trusts. In a criminal case he acts on behalf of a client who is, for example charged with theft.

Honesty is considered to be an important prerequisite for practising as an attorney.

ADVOCATE

An advocate conducts civil cases eg. claims for damages, disputes over contracts, insurance claims, divorce cases etc. and criminal cases (instigated by the State against someone who has allegedly violated or committed an offence against the law of the country) in various courts of law by appearing either for a defendant or a plaintiff in a civil case, or for the State or an accused in a criminal case.

Clients do not generally contact an advocate directly, but are referred to him by an attorney who puts the client's case to him with all the relevant information.

The advocate plays an important role by ensuring that all the evidence in favour of his client is presented.

To practice as an advocate of the High Court you need to apply to join a Bar which is a society of practicing advocates for a particular area or province, complete a pupillage period of one year and after pupillage the advocate is expected to write an examination, and if successful, he/she is admitted as a member of the Bar.

An advocate practices for his/her own account.

LEGAL ADVISOR

Legal Advisors are often qualified attorneys or advocates, or persons who have completed a law degree. They work in an advisory capacity at corporations, companies and other organisations. A legal practitioner cannot be employed as a legal advisor while registered on the role of practicing attorneys or advocates.

LEGAL ACADEMIC

Law graduates can elect to pursue a career in lecturing law. Law lecturers at the various universities are teachers and researchers of the law. Many lecturers have experience as practising attorneys or advocates. A lecturer can be promoted to a senior lecturer, professor, head of a department or law school or Dean of the Faculty.



MAGISTRATE

The magistrate may be regarded as a general practitioner of the law.

The magistrate is not a civil servant and acts independently without interference from the government. He/she also acts as registrar of births and deaths, marries people, administers deceased estates and acts as Receiver of Revenue. In criminal cases (such as rape, fraud, murder and culpable homicide) the magistrate is required to ensure that both the prosecutor and the defense attorney comply with the rules so that the accused gets a fair trial.

He/she listens to the evidence and decides whether the accused is guilty or not and imposes penalties where needed. In civil cases the magistrate will listen to the evidence and hand down a civil judgement, which is aimed at restoring the position between the disputing parties.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

The public prosecutor represents the Director of Public Prosecutions in criminal cases in a district or regional court. He/she also studies police dockets and often asks for additional police investigation to build up a complete case. On the basis of the evidence he/she decides if the accused may be charged and in terms of which law or regulation this should be done. The public prosecutor puts the case to the court, explaining and arguing all relevant evidence, whether against or in favour of the accused, to ensure that justice prevails.

The public prosecutor's work is done mostly in court and in his/her office where research is done on a case. He/she also has to do administrative work and has to write reports to the Director of Public Prosecutions and keep record of cases dealt with. A public prosecutor with a LLB degree can transfer to the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions where he/she will prosecute cases, mostly in the High Court, as a state advocate.

STATE ATTORNEY

The State Attorney functions like an ordinary firm of attorneys, except that its clients are the different departments of the Government and not private individuals. The State Attorney's major function is to protect the interests of the State by acting for all government departments and administrations in civil cases and for officials sued in their official capacity. When the State buys or sells property, the State Attorney is concerned with the contractual aspects and therefore, conveyancers in the State Attorney's Office undertake the preparation of deeds of transfer and bonds.

TRAINING FOR CAREERS IN LAW **COMPULSORY SCHOOL SUBJECTS**

English

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Latin and any other language.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A grade 12-certificate with exemption.

DURATION

The duration of the LLB degree is a minimum of four years full-time study.



TRAINING

UNIVERSITY

The following diploma and degrees are offered by most South African universities:

- Diploma iuris
- BA(Law)
- BProc
- LLM
- Bluris
- BCom(Law)
- LLB
- LLD
- Specialised diplomas/certificates in Tax, Human Rights and Labour Law.

More details on the content and duration of the different courses can be obtained from any of the university Law Faculties.

BPROC DEGREE

This is a four-year university course mainly offered by universities for the qualification of the persons who wish to be admitted as attorneys.

LLB DEGREE

After the LLB degree you do two years service under articles of clerkship with a South African firm of attorneys or community service at an accredited law clinic or approved office of the Legal Aid Board, whereafter the successful completion of the Attorneys Admission Examination will follow.

FURTHER STUDIES

LLM degree (Master's degree)

LLD degree (Doctor of Law)

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

There are various specialised career opportunities which an attorney can follow such as intellectual property law, insolvency, entrepreneurial law, insurance, tax, and criminal procedures.

BA LAW

This programme meets specific training needs that emerge from the demand for employees who possess specific knowledge of law, but who are also schooled in aspects of the social or human sciences. The aim of this package is to train students as law practitioners with a broad academic background, to provide an alternative route to the eventual obtainment of an LLB degree. If you obtain your LLB qualification after the degree BA (Law) was conferred, you will have obtained two qualifications in two different fields within five years.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

This qualification can lead to career opportunities in the field of law, the private sector (as consultant), the public sector (in careers where knowledge of law is recommended) and the media (where a background in law is important).

BCOM LAW

The purpose of this package is to provide a broad formative education that can lead to various career options. The degree is a combination of the BCom and LLB subjects. The aim of this package is to train students as law practitioners with a broad academic background, to provide an alternative route to the eventual obtainment of an LLB degree. If you obtain your LLB qualification after the degree BCom (Law) was conferred, you will have obtained two qualifications in two different fields within five years.



POLICING

The functions of the South African Police Service as defined in the Police Act are, amongst others, to preserve the internal security of the Republic of South Africa to maintain law and order, to investigate any offence or alleged offence and to prevent crime.

DIVISIONS OF WORK

- Supporting Service – Administration.
- Crime Combating and Investigation – Various units e.g. Murder and Robbery and Vehicle Theft.
- Human Resources Management – Recruiting, training and planning.
- Internal Stability – Combating of violence.
- Visible Policing
- Community Relations – Liaison services between the news media, police activities and the public.

The policeman and policewoman sometimes work long, irregular hours, facing dangerous situations.

REQUIREMENTS

He/she must be a South African citizen, have no mental or physical handicap, and be prepared to take the Oath of Office.

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SUBJECTS

English, Mercantile Law and Business Economics.

SCHOOL TRAINING

The minimum school requirements are a Grade 12 certificate or equivalent.

TRAINING

Members of the service receive basic training at the various South African Police Colleges.

FURTHER TRAINING

UNIVERSITY

- A three-year National Diploma BPol

Other three-year BA Degrees

- Administration of Criminal Justice
- Criminology
- Police Science

Followed by a Honours (Hons), Masters (MA) and Doctoral (DLitt et Phil) degrees in Criminology, Police Science and Penology.

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

A Three-year NDip: Policing

A four-year BTech: Policing

Followed by MTech: Policing and DTech: Policing degrees.



National Diploma: Forensic Investigation

BTech: Forensic Investigation

MTech: Forensic Investigation

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career opportunities exist in the South African Police Service as reservist, security officials or community policing, crime investigation, criminal record centre, forensic auditing and forensic project management.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT

The mission of the Department of Correctional Services is to protect society against the occurrence of crime. Prisoners and other persons in their care must be safely guarded and treated and cared for in a human manner. Various programs are offered with the aim to rehabilitate the prisoner. Commercial activities such as building operations, workshops and farming, offer job and training opportunities to prisoners and enable the department to be self-sufficient in certain respects.

FIELDS OF SPECIALISATION

The possibility exists, within the disciplinary group of careers, to specialise according to qualifications obtained and departmental courses successfully completed. The various fields are instructors, dog guides, catering, correctional supervision, logistics, artisans, finances, nurses, agriculture, religious services, social workers, clinical psychologists and educators.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A Grade 12 Certificate is required for permanent appointment and exemption is necessary to enrol for degree courses.

TRAINING

Basic training is offered at the training colleges. After successful completion of the course members are transferred to the various prisons in the country.

UNIVERSITY

A three-year National Diploma: Correctional Service Management.

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

A three-year National Diploma is offered in Policing, Correctional Service Management and Security Risk Management. These national diplomas can be followed by a fourth year for the BTech and an additional year for the MTech degrees in Forensic Investigation, Policing, Correctional Service Management and Security Risk Management.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Correctional Services official, skills development officer, manager and security official.



SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT

Factors such as the high crime rate and the nature of an organisation's activities give rise to the need for security personnel who can provide security and protection of material, information and personnel.

An organisation can develop its own in-house security force (in-house security), or it can rely on security services rendered by private security companies (contract security).

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Senior Certificate or an equivalent accredited qualification.

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SUBJECTS

English

FURTHER STUDY

UNISA AND UNIVERSITIES OF TECHNOLOGY

A three-year National Diploma: Security Risk Management

BTech: Security Risk Management

MTech: Security Risk Management

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The following careers can be followed: investigating officer, operational officer, security supervisor, security inspector, security site supervisor, security site manager, security operational manager, control room supervisor, control room managers, security risk manager, protection service manager and loss prevention manager.

The qualification is designed for security supervisors and security managers. At the achievement of these qualifications, students will be able to demonstrate the ability to apply management principals to ensure that security officers under their supervision are cost effectively utilised.

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