COUNCIL OF LEGAL EDUCATION

HUGH WOODING LAW SCHOOL

STUDENT SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Approved by the Academic Committee of the Hugh Wooding Law School
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Office for Quality Assurance, Research & Effectiveness
Hugh Wooding Law School
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1.0. Overview of the Manual

The Student Services Policy Manual was developed to provide all students and employees with responsibility for student matters of the Hugh Wooding Law School (HWLS) with the necessary guidance and tools for the effective administration of student services. In general, this manual documents the policies within the following format:

**Policy Category:** the broad policy area being defined within research

**Policy Statement:** a statement outlining the philosophy and goals of the policy

**Policy Procedure/Regulation:** the stepwise procedure that supports the execution of the policy

The policies and procedures outlined in the manual take into account any other Council or Law School policies that are in force at the time. However, it does not supersede the use of the *Regulations for Full-Time Academic and Senior Administrative Staff* and the *Regulations for Professional Law Schools* published by Council but do elaborate on these, as necessary. Such documents may be read together as required. The manual also makes reference to all those administrative forms, whether paper-based or electronic, that are to be used in the application of the procedures.

The Student Services Policy aims to provide relevant psycho-social, administrative and technical services for all registered students of the HWLS. Given the governance structure and culture of Council and the HWLS, the policy is established on the basis of mutual consultation and agreement between the HWLS Management and SRC. The obligations and responsibilities for the administration of these services are therefore shared between both parties. Corresponding procedures are outlined to execute the policies.

This document shall be for the use by Academic and Senior Administrative Staff, Administrative staff and access by ALL students.
2.0. Student Services Versus Student Affairs

The HWLS makes a clear distinction between Student Services and Student Affairs.

HWLS’ student population is primarily adults, usually between 21 and 65 years old from six jurisdictions in the Eastern and Southern Caribbean region. In this context, the School recognises the range of needs of students within this broad age cohort and so caters to all levels. It defines Student Services as a programme outside of formal instruction that facilitates the development of its students’ life through a range of activities and events. The Law School encourages a vibrant community of students whose welfare, emotional, physical, intellectual, cultural and other social aspects are encouraged and nurtured.

Student Affairs, however, is defined as the range of administrative services offered by employees to admit, enrol, examine, certify and graduate students during and after their educational journey at HWLS.

3.0. Accommodation and Housing Services

Policy Statement:

Given the competing interests for accommodation and housing among all students from several tertiary education institutions within the vicinity of the HWLS, and that such arrangements are at the discretion of the individual, the HWLS facilitates arrangements for housing and accommodation information to current and potential students. Only in emergency circumstances, overseas students from other Commonwealth territories, including the Caribbean, may be assisted directly by members of administrative staff once a formal request has been made.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

3.1. The U.W.I. Student Advisory Services Office has an arrangement to publish an annual register of housing for students within the vicinity of the Law School. Students may contact the Office to obtain suitable accommodation information wherever necessary;

3.2. The SRC has established a viable accommodation referral system to assist new students. Students from other jurisdictions who plan on attending the HWLS in a given year and require assistance with finding suitable accommodation may reach the SRC’s Welfare Officer at welfare.src@gmail.com;

3.3. A list of all property for lease by students as well as individual advertisements prepared by landlords for accommodation in St. Augustine, Curepe, Tunapuna, St. Joseph and other environs may be published on the School’s noticeboards;
3.4. When an emergency situation arises, such students may contact the Office of the Registrar at academic@hwlsedu.com, ext. 235 or visit the office to lodge a complaint and make a request for emergency relocation assistance;

3.5. When complaints about the terms and conditions of accommodation arise, a student may contact the Registrar’s Office at academic@hwlsedu.com, Ext. 235 or visit the Office. The Registrar’s office takes note of the issues and refers the student to the Legal Aid Clinic for obtaining advice on how to handle their lease agreements and, wherever possible, seek representation to have concerns and complaints addressed.

4.0. Academic Advisory Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS provides sound academic advisement to students enrolled in the programmes leading to the Legal Education Certificate. Academic advisement provides guidance to students to enhance their approaches to learning as well as assignment and examination preparation for each course of study undertaken at the Law School.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

4.1. The Senior Tutor is responsible for the promotion and effective administration of academic advisement provided to all students;

4.2. All full-time Tutors are required to make available a minimum of two (2) hours per week as office hours for provision of academic advice to students. These hours are noted in course manuals, posted up on the Tutor’s offices and on the HWLS’ website;

4.3. Students seeking to obtain academic advisement are required to contact their Tutors, through their professional administrators, in advance, to make an appointment during the scheduled office hours to discuss any area of concern that affects their learning and progress in the course of study;

4.4. A Tutor may avail himself/herself during published office hours in the event a student wishes to consult with him/her but this is subject to previously scheduled appointments. Alternative dates or times may be recommended by the Tutor at his/her discretion;

4.5. Subject to the need, a student may also seek academic advice from a Tutor through contact by email, telephone and/or the TWEN learning management system. The specific method for contacting the Tutor would have been published on the course manual and discussed with students in teaching sessions;
4.6. Students are encouraged to record the deliberations and/or outcomes at advisement meetings with Tutors to capture the advice rendered and to document such advice as a resource for their intellectual, academic and personal development.

5.0. Alcohol and Illicit Drugs

Policy Statement:

The HWLS facilitates an intellectual environment that caters to the holistic development of its students and the adherence to the rule and practice of law. Within this context, it discourages consumption, sale, manufacturing or possession of alcohol and illicit drug substances within the vicinity of the Law School. Such substances include, but are not limited to:

- Alcoholic spirits (exceptions are made when approvals are granted for special events);
- Cannabis (marijuana);
- Cocaine (including crack cocaine);
- Hallucinogens (including poppers, mushrooms and hallucinogenic medications);
- Opiates;
- Tobacco (within the building).

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

5.1. All substances listed in 5.0. above are strictly prohibited from use, access, preparation or distribution by a member of faculty/staff or student to other students within the Law School premises;

5.2. The Principal may waive the ban on access or use of alcoholic spirits only at special events arranged by the administration or in conjunction with the SRC. In such an instance clear guidelines shall be given on the means to access, consume and distribute such alcoholic spirits;

5.3. The SRC has been charged with the responsibility to educate the student population on the ban enforced in the use, access and distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs and to facilitate measures to enforce such compliance;

5.4. Any student who has been found in possession, use or distribution of any such substances and therefore has failed to comply with this policy may be provided first with a verbal warning followed by a written warning;

5.5. Where evidence can show that a student may have committed a non-academic offence such as outlined in this policy, the student, having been warned, shall be brought before the Disciplinary Committee as set out in Regulation 23 of the 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools to account for the offence;

5.6. Any student who has been regarded as committing a serious offence that threatens the well-being and health of others within the Law School or outside, could face suspension or
expulsion from the Law School as outlined in Regulation 23 (6) (b) of the 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools. Additionally, the matter may be reported to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service for further investigation.

**6.0. Career and Placement Services**

**Policy Statement:**

The HWLS is a vocational educational institution that prepares its students for legal professional careers in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty establishing the Council of Legal Education (CLE) and the Legal Professional Acts of various jurisdictions under the CLE. Career and placement services are provided to ensure that students have unique apprenticeships for practical learning while enrolled and access to employment opportunities following successful completion of the Legal Education Certificate.

**Policy Procedure/Regulation:**

6.1. The Legal Education Certificate (LEC) programme requires students to have access to placement opportunities for apprenticeships within the In-Service Training component and the Legal Aid and Specialist Clinics;

6.2. Students who are required to access placement within the In-Service Training have varied options for placement;

6.3. Students who have an expressed interest in having an apprenticeship with a particular law firm may opt to approach such a law firm directly. Once the firm has accepted the student, he/she writes to the Senior Tutor indicating that he/she has confirmed arrangements with a particular firm and based on this information the Senior Tutor contacts the law firm. The law firm is sent assessment forms for documenting the performance of placed students;

6.4. Where students are unable to obtain placement in a firm on their own, the Senior Tutor’s office of the HWLS offers a placement service which finds suitable opportunities in law firms for students to undertake a ten (10) week summer apprenticeship attachment;

6.5. In the instance of In-Service training placement with the Caribbean-based Ministries of the Attorney General and such related government departments, the Senior Tutor writes to the Minister annually requesting placement. The Ministry then informs how many persons could be accommodated at that Ministry for placement after which the Law School selects students for this placement;

6.6. For a Transitional Programme student, a placement form is included in the registration package for the student to indicate whether he/she would make his/her own arrangements or would like assistance for placement as these students are required to work in a law firm for three (3) days per week;
6.7. Students who desire to access placement within the Specialist Clinics offered by the Legal Aid Clinic during their second year of study should submit a written application along with their curriculum vitae to the Director, Legal Aid Clinic. The application should include a short summary of why they would like to participate in a particular clinic. The Director of the Legal Aid Clinic would advise of such placements by notice. If students desire to change their assignment this must be done by mutual consent and exchange with another student who may have been placed in a student’s Specialist Clinic of choice;

6.8. Students nearing completion of the LEC programme, may have the option of applying for judicial research, legal research and attorney traineeship programmes with the Judiciary as well as postgraduate opportunities which may be advertised by the Law School each year. Alternatively, some students may seek to contact law firms where they pursued the In-Service Training or Legal Aid Specialist Clinics for employment as junior attorneys within Trinidad and Tobago or other native jurisdictions;

6.9. As of September 2011, the Law School offers one-year contracts for two Legal Intern posts for newly graduated attorneys who excelled in the Legal Aid Clinic while at the HWLS. Currently two such posts are offered and cater to the provision of legal practice within the Clinic;

6.10. The Law School offers a Personal and Professional Development Seminar Series for students. The Series invites key practitioners from the Legal and Judiciary community to deliver career-related seminars to prepare students for engagement in the world-of-work.

7.0. Conduct and Discipline

Policy Statement:

The Council’s 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools guide student conduct and discipline and facilitates the handling of academic and non-academic offences committed by students within the institution.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

7.1. As set out in Regulations 23 of the 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools, the HWLS shall establish a Disciplinary Committee to enforce student discipline. This committee shall meet to discuss and adjudicate on disciplinary matters concerning offences committed by students;

7.2. Students are required to comply with the code of attire for attorneys-in-training particularly during compulsory court attendance, moots and the Legal Aid Clinics.
8.0. Disability Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to inclusive and special education for its students. As far as possible, it provides access to facilities, materials and learning opportunities for students who may have a physical, mental or learning disability. The policy of the HWLS is to minimise the likely negative outcomes which a disability may have on a student’s enrolment, learning, assessment and general student experience at the Law School. Disabilities may include:

- Anxiety disorder
- ADHD/ADD (attention deficit disorder)
- Dyslexia
- Hearing impairment
- Limb impairment
- Muscular dystrophy/sclerosis
- Speech impairment
- Visual impairment

In accordance with this policy, the architecture of the HWLS is built for wheelchair access throughout the premises.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

8.1. With reference to Regulation 15 of the 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools the Principal may require a student, on entry into the Law School or at any subsequent time, to be medically examined by a registered practitioner approved by the Principal;

8.2. In accordance with 8.1. above, any student who has a physical, mental or learning disability should seek to provide medical certification from a registered medical or counselling practitioner as proof to the Law School as soon as possible after registration;

8.3. Further in accordance with 8.1., the Law School can, subject to Principal’s approval, make provisions for coverage of the cost of such medical certification/clearance if it falls outside of the provisions of the Health Insurance for students;

8.4. Students who have medically-certified physical, mental or learning disabilities, whether congenital or experientially acquired, are required to document this on the 1st Year Student Information form when they are applying to the Law School;

8.5. Alternatively, a student may report to the Office of the Registrar in person and outline his/her special needs for consideration. The Registrar’s Office would document the need and discuss suitable measures which could be provided to comfortably accommodate the student.
9.0. Faith-Based Clubs and Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to providing an environment where all persons who practice their faith can do so in an ecumenically-sensitive setting.

In this regard, several faith-based clubs and services are managed by the SRC and cater to a diverse multi-religious student body. These include:

i) Catholic Students Movement;
ii) HWLS Hindu Students’ Society;
iii) Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship;
iv) Islamic Movement.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

9.1. All Faith-Based student bodies are required to register annually with the SRC to receive subventions for operating their clubs and societies;

9.2. Students who are desirous of becoming members should contact the membership officers of the Faith-Based Clubs and Societies to participate in these bodies and access events held by them annually.

10.0. Food and Beverage Service and Sales

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to ensuring that food and beverage offered to students, staff and the public meets all national requirements for preparation, handling and distribution and that food items sold are done within a fair pricing environment.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

10.1. Any entity providing food and beverage to students, staff and members of the public are required to comply with the Public Health and Sanitation Services requirements of the Ministry of Local Government of Trinidad and Tobago for issuance of a food badge;

10.2. Food and beverage sales are to be priced in accordance with established market rates for educational and similar institutions so that fair and competitive prices are offered to students, staff and members of the public who purchase food and beverage items.
11.0. Health Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to providing students with access to an efficient health care referral service offered through its agreement with the University of the West Indies at St. Augustine. Students receive Full-Time Group Health Plan coverage. This provides them with access to the U.W.I.’s Health Services Unit, including the Walk-In Clinic, Nursing Services, Immunization, Pharmacy, Chronic Disease Clinic, Sexual Health Clinic and the Students’ Health and Wellness Promotion Programme.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

11.1. When a student registers with the HWLS he/she receives health coverage and an I.D. card which they may use to access the Health Services Unit adjacent to Trinity Hall, U.W.I.;

11.2. Students who fall ill have access to a dedicated Sick Room Facility on Level 1 of the Law School. They may use the first aid and amenities provided or remain within the Sick Room until they are escorted to an appropriate health services facility;

11.3. Generally students who wish to visit the U.W.I.’s Health Services Unit on their own but in cases of a bona fide emergency such as critical illness, the HWLS’ Shuttle Service will immediately accompany the student to the Unit or hospital if this is deemed necessary.

12.0. ICT Helpdesk Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to providing students with access to effective computer-based services within the Legal Aid Clinic and Library. In order to meet such requirements, the HWLS offers a dedicated ICT Helpdesk for students to get technical support and advice.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

12.1. Students should first determine which aspects of hardware and/or software support would qualify for assistance;

12.2. A student who is desirous of getting ICT Helpdesk support should download and complete the Helpdesk request form available from the dedicated ICT helpdesk technician and forward this to document the assistance required;

12.3. The ICT Helpdesk can be reached by calling Ext. 352 or sending an email to michael.rampersadsingh@hwlsedu.com.
13.0. Library and Information Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is committed to providing students with access to an efficient library system which consists of a range of print and electronic learning resources. The Library publishes an annual booklist and has produced Library Rules which regulate how the Library provides information sources and resources for study and research.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

13.1. Each student receives an updated copy of the booklist and the library rules when he/she registers annually;

13.2. Students are required to comply with the rules so established as it relates to their conduct within the Library;

13.3. Students can access online research sites using passwords provided by the Library as well as library systems available from other Law Schools through the HWLS Library.

14.0. Pastoral and Counselling Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS ensures that its students receive effective pastoral and counselling services during their tenure. Pastoral services provide students with general guidance as they relate to their academic, intellectual, personal productivity and professional development. Counselling services are interventions which promote mental and psycho-social development.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

14.1. Pastoral services which are provided to students are specified under policies 4 (Academic Advisory Services), 6 (Career and Placement Services), 9 (Faith-Based Clubs and Services), 15 (Students’ Representative Council) and 18 (Student Enhancement and Enrichment Services) within the Student Services Policy;

14.2. Students can meet with the Ombudsman in a safe and confidential environment where they could raise concerns, complaints and questions with a view to resolving disputes. Students may reach the Ombudsman at hwlsombudsman@hwlsedu.com.

14.3. Mental health counselling is provided to students by the U.W.I.’s Health Services Unit. A professional psychiatrist is on hand at the Clinic for students wanting anonymous mental health counselling. Such a student may visit the Unit to access this service;
14.4. Ms. Jiselle Alexander provides direct counselling services for grave situations and emergencies. She may be contacted via the Office of the Registrar.

15.0. Students’ Representative Council

Policy Statement:

The Council of Legal Education has established the Students’ Representative Council (SRC) in accordance with Regulation 24 of the 2016 Regulations for Professional Law Schools. The SRC supports the HWLS in the effective administration of student services and advocates on behalf of students’ rights and their educational and development needs in accordance with their constitution.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

15.1. The SRC is duly represented on several standing staff-student liaison committees at the level of the Council of Legal Education and the HWLS and therein represents students’ rights and needs. Within this framework, the SRC champions students’ causes and makes provisions for enabling effective student services;

15.2. An annual student contribution is made to the SRC on registration. This contribution is used to establish the SRC’s annual budget and may include any monies generated through fund raising campaigns. This budget supports the administration of all clubs, societies, activities and services rendered by the SRC as part of its annual student services campaign;

15.3. Additional funding for student services offered through the SRC may be through an injection of monies which may be provided by the HWLS, but this is subject to the availability of funds;

15.4. To ensure proper governance of the SRC in relation to the HWLS administration, the SRC Executive is required to undergo an annual induction programme, which may include training in such topics as quality assurance, customer service, budget accounting and student services, organised by the Law School.

16.0. Student Reception and Orientation Services

Policy Statement:

The HWLS enables Reception and Orientation services to include immigration support for overseas students and student-staff ‘Meet and Greet’ for new students.
Policy Procedure/Regulation:

16.1. The Immigration authorities at the airport in Trinidad will be provided with a list of the students expected from overseas during the first week of September. New and continuing overseas students may be asked to show their letters of offer to the HWLS and are to retain it for that purpose. It is the prerogative of the Immigration authorities to determine the length of stay for which a student is entitled;

16.2. Following registration, new students attend a one week Orientation Programme where they are inducted into the HWLS. They also participate in seminars presented by Tutors, staff, graduates and practitioners about the legal education programme and the legal profession;

16.3. New students also attend a ‘Meet and Greet’ with staff and an evening cocktail reception hosted by the SRC to officially introduce them to members of the HWLS family.

17.0. Student Cultural, Recreational and Sporting Events

Policy Statement:

The HWLS facilitates annual student cultural, recreational and sporting events that are managed by the SRC.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

17.1. The SRC publishes an annual calendar of cultural, recreational and sporting events for the student body. This annual calendar includes the following event categories/events:

- Carnival Event
- Christmas Concert
- Divali Celebrations
- Easter Concert
- Hiking
- Island Tours
- Island Nights (Barbados, Guyana, OECS and Trinidad and Tobago)
- IVCF Bible Week
- Karaoke
- ‘March’ Affair
- Sports and Family Day
- Table Tennis Tournaments

17.2. Each Club or Society which hosts an event makes the necessary arrangements for executing the event utilizing a mix of subventions provided by the SRC and its own fund raising and must submit a letter to the Principal seeking any required permission;
17.3. The SRC monitors the quality of event execution by getting student/participant feedback using the Customer Feedback Card system organised by the Office for Quality Assurance, Research and Effectiveness.

18.0. **Student Enhancement and Enrichment Services**

**Policy Statement:**

The HWLS makes provisions for determining, enhancing and enriching the learning skills and talents of its students.

**Policy Procedure/Regulation:**

18.1. The Office of the Registrar provides all newly admitted Year 1 students upon registration with a Student Data Form which captures talent information as well as computer and learning skills data;

18.2. The Office for Quality Assurance, Research and Effectiveness produces a Students’ Talent and Skills Bank which analyses the learning skills deficits of its student population and provides this data to the Office of the Registrar;

18.3. The Office of the Registrar and the SRC together design and mount specialist student group workshops to provide support to enhance students’ learning and computer skills development, as necessary;

18.4. The Library may also provide training to students in such areas as library research skills and online library systems.

19.0. **Student Transportation Services**

**Policy Statement:**

The HWLS makes provisions for a shuttle service with two or more vehicles. This serves to transport students within the vicinity of the Law School. The policy of the Law School is that a student without transport access may be provided with transportation to and from the nearest public transit service.

**Policy Procedure/Regulation:**

19.1. The Office of the Registrar rosters its bus shuttles and manages the Shuttle service on a daily basis, from morning, midday and evening until Library closure;
19.2. Any student desirous of using the Shuttle service shall access the service on the premises during routine scheduled service times to be taken off campus or at certain designated public transit hub areas where they will be brought to the School’s premises.

20.0. Students in Financial Need

Policy Statement:

The HWLS is aware that some students may find themselves in financial difficulty during the year and aims to find solutions to ensure the well being of its students.

Policy Procedure/Regulation:

20.1. A student who is in financial need should submit a letter to the Principal outlining their financial problem.

20.2. The Principal will meet with the student to determine the student’s needs and identify solutions to provide some relief.

20.3. While assistance may be provided on a case by case basis, the HWLS cannot meet all of the financial needs of students.