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ARTICLE 1 - INTRODUCTION:

The Law Reform Commission was established by an Act of Parliament, namely, the Law Reform Commission Act, 1994 as amended by the National Provisional Ruling Council (Repeals and Modification) Act, 1996 ("the LRC Act). Its primary mandate as set out in Section 3 (1) of the Act is to keep under review all the laws of Sierra Leone both statutory and otherwise, for the purpose of their reform, development, consolidation and codification. The Commission is also mandated to develop new laws where appropriate. Under Section 170 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, the laws of Sierra Leone include the following:

- a) *“the Constitution of Sierra Leone;*
- b) *laws made by or under the authority of Parliament as established by the Constitution;*
- c) *any orders, rules, regulations and other statutory instruments made by any person or authority pursuant to a power conferred in that behalf by this Constitution or any other law;*
- d) *the existing law; and*
- e) *the common law”.*

The present structure of the office comprises a Research Department which carries out the principal mandate of the Commission and the Administrative department which provides administrative support. Both departments are supervised by the Secretary, who acts on the directives of the Chairman and Commissioners. The present staff strength of the Research department is less than ten (10) and the entire office, less than twenty (20). As such, given the broad mandate of the Commission, the Commission realizes that an important way to overcome the dearth in staff capacity is to make use of interns both local and international to assist in the fulfillment of its mandate. It must also be noted that the use of interns is not new to the Commission as over the years, it has been making use of such.

PURPOSE:

In the meeting of the Commission on the 2nd June 2023, the Commissioners unanimously approved the proposition of making use of interns and further advised that the secretariat develops a policy that will lay out the guidelines that will govern the intake, scope, activities and operation of such interns. As such, it is in fulfillment of such directives from the Commission that this Policy is formulated. The purpose of the policy is to establish or outline guidelines and procedures for both local and international internship programs at the Commission. The policy aims to provide meaningful learning experiences for interns while ensuring the institution's objectives and values are upheld. The objective is to ensure a positive and productive experience for both the intern and the Commission.

Though the principal mandate of the Commission is based on legal research, the scope of internship could when and where necessary be extended to areas of administrative support.

WHO ARE INTERNS?

In most cases, interns are persons studying at institutions of higher learning; or new graduates; or persons with an occupational or vocational experience that is commensurate to higher education level. The labor market cannot necessarily provide enough employment opportunities to meet the demands of job-seekers. Internship programs have, therefore, become an optional and valuable avenue for such persons to consolidate their learning experiences; utilise their time in a learning environment; and gain new hands-on experience, to prepare themselves for future gainful employment or other related engagements. Internship may benefit both the intern and an employer, through varying individual contributions; and create a platform for people to establish and nurture new professional relationships. The relationship has no or minimal pecuniary advantage or obligation, as it is mostly based on volunteer basis.

The internship offered by the Commission is a commitment to provide short-term supervised work experience usually related to a student's specific field of study or career aspirations. The programme will combine practical work experience with a structured learning experience through specific briefs aimed at achieving identified objectives of the Secretariat.

Objectives

The objectives of the internship program are as follows:

- To provide interns with practical exposure to the workings of a Law Reform Commission.
- To enhance interns' knowledge of legal research, policy analysis and law reform processes.
- To foster professional development and networking opportunities for interns.
- To contribute to the institution's mission of promoting legal reforms for the betterment of society.

ARTICLE 2 - ETHICAL, PROFESSIONAL & LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE COMMISSION TOWARDS INTERNS:

The Commission has considered ten (10) ethical, professional and legal factors, in providing internship experience to deserving applicants:

1. Even though the internship includes actual operations of work in the Commission, it is comparable to training which would be given in an educational setting.
2. The experience of the internship is for the benefit of the intern.
3. The interns would not necessarily displace regular employees, but work under the close supervision of existing staffs, providing valuable time for the intern's advancement and career development.
4. Although the Commission may benefit from the work of the interns, the interns render their services as a training opportunity without any contractual obligation on the part of the Commission to pay remuneration. The Commission may, however, on its volition, on a case by case basis, decide to voluntarily offer stipends to interns.
5. All interns shall understand that they are not entitled to gainful employment at the Commission at the end of their internships.
6. The Commission and the Intern fully understand that the Intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.
7. In line with the GAWE Act 2023 the Commission shall as far as possible give preference to female interns where appropriate and necessary.
8. In compliance with the Persons with Disability Act 2011 persons with disability will not be discriminated against by reason of disability both in consideration for engagement and when serving as interns.
9. The Commission shall be assured that an applicant for internship is of sound mental capacity and has attained the prerequisite knowledge and skills that would enable him/her to benefit from the internship programme.
10. The Commission is fully committed to the "*Internship Programme*" and would therefore provide the necessary support for the internship to be cordial and productive.

ARTICLE 3 - ELIGIBILITY

1. Interns must be currently enrolled in an accredited tertiary educational institution or must have graduated within the previous two years.
2. Local internship: Local internships are open to undergraduate or graduate students pursuing a degree in law or a related field from a recognized local university.
3. International Internships: International internships are open to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a degree in law or a related

field from a recognized international university. Applicants must possess a valid visa and work permit, where the law so requires, allowing them to work as interns in Sierra Leone.

4. Internship positions are open to individual who possess the necessary skills and qualifications for the specific role as outlined in the internship posting.
5. Interns must meet with any legal requirements or work permits necessary for employment in Sierra Leone.

ARTICLE 4 - INTERNSHIP SELECTION PROCEDURE:

Persons with an interest in the work of the Commission are highly encouraged to apply for the “*Law Reform Commission’s Internship Programme*”. The Commission’s programme is posted on the Commission’s website at <http://www.....com>.

In addition to such posting, interested persons may also approach the Secretary and the Director of Research for advice relating to the application and selection procedure for internships.

Applications for internship must be submitted approximately three (3) months or earlier, prior to an Intern’s proposed official starting date, to enable the secretariat or management to have enough time to process the applications or determine the relevance and suitability of such applicants that can contribute to the strategic objective of the Commission.

The Commission’s subcommittee that deals with recruitment shall be charged with the responsibility of overseeing the engagement of interns.

Short-listed applicants will be contacted by the Secretary to the Commission, if further information is required during the review of their applications.

Due to the high volume of applications that may be received by the Commission, only applicants that are short-listed for an interview will be contacted. Once an applicant is deemed suitable to serve as an Intern, he/she will be selected, and notified within 48 hours, following the interview process.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME:

Candidates desiring of an internship placement must formally apply to the Secretary, Law Reform Commission. They may also be recruited from organisations/institutions that have an approved pool of applicants with an interest in internship. For local interns, priority will be given to persons from the National Youth Service Corp or other Government implement employment schemes provided they meet the criteria for engagement.

An application for internship must be accompanied with the following documents:

1. Copies of University studies transcripts (including courses taken and grades received);
2. curriculum vitae detailing relevant work experience;
3. Two (2) letters of recommendation; one from the applicant's present or previous establishment/employer or lecturer / supervisor; and another, from a person that has known the applicant for a period not less than three (3) years.
4. A recent police clearance, from the Criminal Investigations Department, in line with International Standards.
5. A recent passport-size photograph should be attached on the applicants form, for identification purposes.

Please note:

- a. All documents and photographs supplied may be returned to the applicant, in a situation where an internship placement is not granted by the Commission where a written request is made by the applicant.
- b. The Commission is at liberty to obtain additional verbal/written reference (s), from persons within the applicant's community.
- c. Though it is expected that interns shall participate in the research work of the Commission, the Secretary and /or Commission may assign the applicant to any Unit that is deemed to be within the applicant's area of competence and/or interest or where the need arises justifying such rotation.
- d. The Commission, the Chairman of the Commission or the Secretary may rotate the intern to other Divisions/Units, in order to accord him/her the varying experiences of the Commission.
- e. All applications for internship placement into particular Division/Units and rotation of interns must be discussed, documented, and approved by the Commission, the Chairman of the Commission or the Secretary.
- f. The internship period must be agreed between the intern and the Commission beforehand specifying the commencement and end date of the internship relationship.
- g. When and where applicable, the Commission may choose to extend the agreed internship period, in consultation with the intern.

- h. The intern must sign an Acceptance/Undertaking form, before commencing the internship placement.
- i. Either party (the Intern and the Commission) is at liberty to terminate the internship-relationship, at any time, by issuing two (2) weeks' notice to the other.
- j. At the expiry of the internship period, the intern will be encouraged to complete an "*Internship Evaluation Form*" of his/her experience with the Commission.
- k. As a form of reciprocation, the intern will be issued with a "*Certificate of Commendation*", signed by the Secretary and the Internship Coordinator.
- l. Interns may, post their time with the Commission and in furtherance of their careers, request references from the Chairman of the Commission or the Secretary, for other internship placement(s) and/or employment opportunities.
- m. The Intern will also receive a "*Letter of Recommendation*", signed by the Secretary or Chairman, or as delegated.

ARTICLE 5 - INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR:

1. The Secretary, Director of Research or any staff assigned that role by the Secretary shall serve as Internship Coordinator.
2. The Commission, the Chairman or the Secretary shall be at liberty to assign specific assignments to an intern.
3. The Internship Coordinator will be directed by the Secretary and will serve as a liaison between the intern and the "*Internship Supervisor*", [defined ante] to ensure that both the Intern and Supervisor are well supported to assure a cordial and productive internship relationship and experience.
4. The Coordinator, as the name implies, will coordinate the recruiting and screening of all intern applicants.
5. The Coordinator will contact applicants directly, if the applicants are shortlisted for an interview.
6. The Coordinator will assist in the selection of interns, to ensure that suitable applicants are given the opportunity to serve and gain experience from the Commission.
7. The Coordinator will promote internship opportunities within the Commission.

8. The Coordinator will serve as the contact person for the Commission.
9. On the advice of the Commission, the Coordinator will, from time to time, review and revise the Law Reform Commission's Internship Policy guidelines, to identify areas for improvement and expansion.
10. The Coordinator will work closely with the Secretary and the Internship Supervisors, to revise the Internship Guidelines, and/or acquaint the Commission with challenges experienced in delivering the Internship Programme.

ARTICLE 6 - **INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR:**

The Commission or Secretary may assign the role of Internship Supervisor to any staff with the competence to do so. The Supervisor will perform the following duties:

1. Liaise with the Internship Coordinator for guidance.
2. The Supervisor will orientate Interns and provide them with the policies, procedures, and other rules governing the Commission.
3. The Supervisor will be a teacher, critic and a mentor that provides on-going supervision to the intern.
4. The Supervisor will regularly meet with the intern to define and guide the scope of the work, and will review the intern's progress and provide feedback to the intern.
5. The Supervisor will monitor the intern's time and submit periodic evaluations to the Internship Coordinator, for the attention of the Secretariat or the Commission.
6. The Supervisor will be a signatory to the "*Certificate of Commendation*", awarded to the Intern.
7. The Supervisor will inform the Internship Coordinator of any challenges that are or are likely to impede the internship-relationship.
8. The Supervisor will commit time to develop the intern, promote community goodwill and offer insight into the activities of the Commission.
9. The Supervisor will provide periodic reminders to the Intern, with regard his/her responsibilities, and will appraise the intern.

ARTICLE 7 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNS:

1. Interns must adhere to policies, procedures, and rules governing staff of the Commission and should conduct themselves in a professional manner.
2. Interns should be regular and punctual at work and work the required number of hours/days agreed to by the intern and their supervisor.
3. Interns should notify their supervisor if they are unable to attend work or perform assigned tasks on time.
4. Interns should behave and dress appropriately to the particular settings of the office.
5. Interns should respect the confidentiality of the office and all employees.
6. Where necessary, interns must be willing to take the initiative to volunteer for other tasks, but they should initially discuss their intention with their Supervisors.
7. Interns must first of all discuss any work-related problem with their Supervisors, and if necessary with the Internship Coordinator and the Secretary.
8. Interns are highly encouraged to establish and nurture a professional working relationship with Supervisors and colleagues and maintain such cordiality that will facilitate trust and provide avenues for networking.

ARTICLE 8 - RIGHTS OF INTERNS:

The Law Reform Commission will respect the rights of all interns, with regards to protection against discrimination and harassment and shall ensure they work in a cordial and mentally healthy workplace. In this regard interns have the same legal rights as employees of the Commission. However, interns do not have the same rights as staff of the Commission in the realms of unemployment compensation or termination procedures.

ARTICLE 9 - ORIENTATION OF INTERNS:

The Commission will establish goals and objectives, and clarify these goals and objectives before the intern commences work. It is recognised that some interns may need more guidance than others. The Secretariat will, therefore, take many factors into consideration, before approving an application for internship.

All interns will be orientated to the office, activities of the Commission, the "Internship Policy Guidelines" and also the policies, procedures and rules

governing staff of the Commission. Such orientation will take place during the first week of the intern's placement.

ARTICLE 10 - ONGOING TRAINING FOR INTERNS:

As learners, interns appreciate any opportunity to learn new skills or increase their knowledge. Developing a plan for training throughout the internship will keep interns interested in the position and ready to tackle new challenges. Therefore, interns will benefit from ongoing training, which may include the following:

- a. **Skill Development** – There may be a need for training in specific skills such as report writing, conducting legal research, or other tasks directly related to the job. Even interns with great potential may experience difficulties, if they are not instructed in the specifics related to the successful completion of their duties.
- b. **Shadowing** – The Secretary may allow interns to participate in activities and meetings. They will rely on their supervisors and other members of the senior management team to guide them. Hence, the need for shadowing.
- c. **Response to Questions** – Internship Supervisors shall assist interns in active learning, by explaining and clarifying pertinent questions and issues, and also by suggesting and encouraging questions from them, at appropriate times. The Internship Supervisors shall ensure that all queries raised by interns are effectually answered.
- d. **Professional Conferences or Association Meetings** – When possible, the Secretary will offer interns the opportunity to attend training or networking events. This may help interns to get a feel of the overall mission and vision of the Commission and at the same time make them feel that they are valued and supported to learn and interact with professional colleagues.

ARTICLE 11 - MENTORSHIP OF INTERNS:

A mentor is regarded as a counselor, guide, tutor, or coach. Valuable internship experiences do not only include effective supervision, but also, a large component of mentoring. Most interns engage in an internship programme, in order to develop their own career goals.

Mentors help guide Interns through their experiences. This may mean allowing or encouraging the Intern to participate in events that will augment their learning experience. The Commission, therefore, supports interns' attendance to certain staff meetings, subcommittee or consultative meetings or other work-related events. Even though these events may not be directly tied to the intern's specific work duties, they may help provide a broader overview of the activities of the Commission.

A mentorship relationship is valuable for both the intern and the professional, as the intern has the opportunity to consider his or her experience. The mentor

can pass on a wealth of experience and knowledge to the intern, and may also benefit from a fresh viewpoint and new ways of thinking.

ARTICLE 12 - EVALUATIONS:

The Law Reform Commission recognizes that evaluation is an important aspect of an intern's development and that it creates an opportunity to identify the strengths and weaknesses of interns. Therefore, supervisors will adopt a concurrent evaluation approach other than just evaluate the progress of interns at the end of the internship placement.

The evaluation of interns is planned as a learning experience and also an opportunity for a two-sided feedback.

Evaluations that are regularly scheduled help avoid common problems with internships including: miscommunication, misunderstanding of interns' roles, and lack of specific goals and objectives.

To determine the value of the placement experience for future interns, interns will also evaluate their internship experience. Such interns' evaluation might encompass the following questions below:

- Was there educational value or merit in the internship assignment?
- Did the position live up to its initial description?
- Was the Supervisor receptive to the intern's ideas?
- Does the experience relate to the intern's major or career goals?
- Did the intern receive a proper internship orientation?
- Was the Supervisor willing and/or capable of answering the intern's questions?
- Did the intern develop good and ethical work habits?

ARTICLE 13 - INTERNSHIP COMPLETION:

An internship should have a clearly stated end date that is agreed before the commencement of the internship. Completing a formal evaluation process such as the one described above can help both the Internship Supervisor and the intern to bring closure to the experience.

A "Certificate of Commendation" shall be given to the intern on the last day of work, and a recommendation Letter may be issued by the Chairman or the Secretary to the Commission, to assist the intern to attract other suitable internship placements and/or gainful employment.

The overall internship experience will be evaluated as this feedback will not only be prudent for making necessary improvements to the Internship Programme, but also for recognising those Divisions/Units that provide outstanding learning

opportunities for interns. The evaluation form must be returned to the Internship Coordinator.

ARTICLE 14 - FURTHER RULES AND CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION:

Applicants for the Law Reform Commission's Internship Programme are expected to have the necessary resources or other financial support for the duration of the internship. In view of this, the Commission is not obligated to provide participants with remuneration, nor is it possible to provide any reimbursement for any expenses incurred during the internship without the prior approval of the Secretary.

Depending on the intern's proximity to the office and other relevant considerations, the management of the Commission may willingly provide some form of support for the intern but such support should not be viewed as an obligation.

Interns are not considered, in any respect, as officials or staff members of Commission.

Interns are bound by the same duties and obligations as staff of the Commission. Information to which an intern has access during the internship period must not be divulged. Interns must not publish any written work, which contains information relating to activities of the Commission, without prior explicit authorization from the Chairman or the Secretary. In this case, each prospective intern must sign the Acceptance and Undertaking Form.

Interns must provide verbal and/or written notice to their Internship Supervisor, the Internship Coordinator and/or the Secretary, should illness or other unforeseen circumstances prevent them from reporting for work, submitting an assigned time and/or completing the agreed internship period.

Applicants are reminded that these Internship Policy Guidelines constitute a common basis for all interns taking up placements at the Law Reform Commission. These Guidelines may be supplemented by specific requirements of the Commission.

Successful applicants will be notified of the complete Internship Policy Guidelines and specific rules applicable for the Division/Unit to which they are assigned, upon commencement of their internship.

Made this 22nd of November 2023

Yada Williams

Yada Hashim Williams
(Chairman)

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Commissioner

Emmanuel E. Roberts

Justice Emmanuel E. Roberts
(Nominee of the Chief Justice)

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Commissioner

Osman Kanu

Osman Kanu esq.
(Nominee of the Attorney General
& Minister of Justice)

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Commissioner

Emmanuel Saffa Abdulai

Emmanuel Saffa Abdulai
(Nominee of Faculty of Law,
Fourab Bay College, University of Sierra Leone)

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Commissioner

Dr. Abu Bakarr Bangura

Dr. Abu Bakarr Bangura
(Representative of the Sierra Leone Law School)

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Commissioner

Michael Charles

Michael Charles
(Nominee of the Sierra Leone Bar Association)

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Commissioner