

HPNLU TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION (CRIMINAL) 2025

HTAC 1.0



Organised by
HPNLU CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION CENTRE

**Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla
16 Mile, Shimla-Mandi National Highway, Ghandal, District Shimla, HP-171014**



HPNLU TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION

Session: 2025-26

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Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh &
Chancellor, HPNLU Shimla

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Acknowledgement

We hereby acknowledge the visionary leadership of our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Priti Saxena, whose emphasis on skill-based legal education has been a guiding force in designing and bringing the HPNLU trial Advocacy Competition (Criminal), 2025. Her foresight and commitment are deeply appreciated.

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Preamble: A competition to cultivate, enhance, appreciate, honour and reward the trial legal skills amongst law students. It is to simulate real trial court scenarios, imparting training to the participants on criminal trial legal practice, and to promote a competitive spirit to ensure the development of advocacy finesse of the participants.

Objectives:

1. The HPNLU Trial Advocacy Competition (hereinafter referred to as 'HTAC') is a competition which is open to students of the HPNLU Shimla to cultivate, enhance, appreciate, honour and reward their trial advocacy skills. It is to simulate real trial court scenarios, imparting training to the participants in legal practices, to promote competitive spirit among them, and to ensure the development of their advocacy finesse.
2. HTAC is designed as learning-cum-competition for the participating students, and thus it intends to supplement the theoretical learning.
3. Except as otherwise provides, all the court room proceedings under the HTAC will be conducted as per the law laid down under the relevant procedural laws, viz. the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, the Limitation Act, 1963, etc.
4. The Rules laid down under this Code shall be applicable in r/o the participation of the participants, their inter-se relations, and the organisation of the HTAC.



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HPNLU TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION (CRIMINAL), 2025 (RULES AND REGULATIONS)

CHAPTER I: PRELIMINARY

1. Shot title:

This Code may be called the HPNLU Trial Advocacy Competition (Criminal), 2025.

2. Extent and commencement:

- (i) It shall come into force from the date notified on the official website of the HPNLU Shimla.
- (ii) It extends to the students of HPNLU Shimla who have applied and further participated in the HTAC.

3. Definitions: In this code, unless the context otherwise requires, –

- (i) 'Chairperson' means the chairperson of HTAC notified by the University.
- (ii) 'Code' means this code, i.e. the HPNLU Trial Advocacy Competition (Criminal), 2025.

- (iii) 'Court' means and includes the courts mentioned in Rule 13.

Explanation: For the purposes of mock proceedings under the HTAC (Criminal), 'court' means the courts established under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

- (iv) 'Competition' means HPNLU Trial Advocacy Competition (Criminal) 2025.
- (v) 'Miscellaneous application' is an application which is filed by either party to a criminal proceeding, at any stage of the matter, with his/her volition, not necessarily to be filed under any of the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

Explanation: Application filed u/s 348 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, for summoning of witness is not a miscellaneous application. Bail application filed under either of the sections of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 is a miscellaneous application.



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- (vi) 'OC' means the Organising Committee of the HTAC, 2025, approved by the Chairperson of HTAC.
- (vii) 'Registry' means the HTAC Registry that shall be constituted by the OC of the HTAC.
- (viii) 'Student Advocate' means a student of B.A./B.B.A. LL.B. duly registered at HPNLU Shimla who has received registration confirmation to participate in the HTAC as per Rule 5.
- (ix) 'Withdrawal' from the HTAC includes an application submitted by the participant to withdraw from the competition, or any willful non-participation in the competition, which includes non-appearing in the proceedings duly scheduled by the Registry.

4. Exceptions and exemptions clause:

Nothing in this code shall affect or be deemed to affect any rule of law not inconsistent with this Code.

CHAPTER II: REGISTRATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

5. **Registration Process:** For the purpose of inviting applications and further registration of the applicant students, the OC of the HTAC shall follow the following process:

5.1 Invitation to Apply

Online application shall be invited by the OC, and applicants shall apply individually only, not as a team.

Explanation: This is not a team event; each participant will participate individually.

5.2 Eligibility

(a) Applicants must be students of the 2nd/ 3rd / 4th / 5th year of a five-year undergraduate law degree program of HPNLU Shimla.

(b) Eligibility shall be determined on the last date of submitting the application, which shall include extension, if any, given by the OC in r/o the last date of application.

(c) Applicants shall be required to attach proof of eligibility to participate in his/her application.

5.3 Withdrawal from the competition:

Any participant may withdraw from the competition at any stage by writing a letter/email to the OC at least two days before the scheduled stage.

6. **Selection Process:** Student advocates/participants will be nominated through the



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invitation of an expression of interest/ Statement of Purpose (SOP).

Provided that in case of a large number of applications, the OC may notify the following selection process:

- (i) Assessment of Written Test. [40 Marks]
- (ii) Assessment of Brief Personal Interview. [10 Marks]
- (iii) Final selection shall be done on the basis of the cumulative score secured by participants in the written test and personal interview.

CHAPTER III: STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETITION

7. Duration of the competition: The competition shall be held from July 2025 to April 2026 in accordance with the First Schedule.

8. Stages of the competition:

- (i) The competition shall be conducted in various stages as per the calendar shown in the **First Schedule**.
- (ii) Each student advocate will have to play different roles as described in Rule 39 & Rule 40 of this Code. *(Kindly refer to Rule 38, Rule 39, and the **Second Schedule** of this Code)*
- (iii) There will be various elimination rounds at different stages, and only a designated number of student advocates will be allowed to take part in the next stage of the competition. *(See **Third Schedule**)*

9. Language of the competition:

- (i) The language for the competition shall be English.
- (ii) Notwithstanding anything contained in clause (i), Hindi may be used in the documents, provided the participant has submitted a translated English version of that document.
- (iii) Notwithstanding anything contained in clause (i), the student advocate may partially plead in Hindi, provided that it is permitted by the presiding officer of the court.
- (iv) Any person who is assisting the student advocate, including the accused, witness, victim, complainant, and the police official, will speak only in English until and unless allowed by the presiding officer to speak in Hindi.

10. Dress Code:

A participant appearing as an advocate before any court under the HTAC shall wear formal Dress prescribed by HPNLU Shimla.

Provided that the student advocate, while appearing before the designated High Court / Supreme Court, shall wear the advocate's gown.



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11. Jurisdiction applicable (trial jurisdiction & territorial jurisdiction)

- (i) For the purpose of the competition, student advocates have the discretion to choose the name of any sessions court of any district of Himachal Pradesh.
- (ii) The offence alleged to have been committed in the FIR and Charge-sheet Report must be a cognizable offence which is triable by a Court of Sessions.
- (iii) The storyline of the student advocate in the FIR / Charge-sheet Report may include more than one offence.

12. Constitution of courts:

- (i) In the district, there shall be Magistrate's Courts and District & Sessions Courts in accordance with applicable Rules notified by the High Court of Himachal Pradesh / State of Himachal Pradesh.
- (ii) The court mentioned in Rule 13(i) will exercise jurisdiction as the respective court exercises as per provisions laid down in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- (iii) There shall be a High Court of Himachal Pradesh that will entertain original petitions and miscellaneous applications/petitions as per the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (Act No. 46 of 2023). Further provided that the High Court may exercise the power as per provisions laid down in the Constitution of India.
- (iv) There shall be a Supreme Court which may entertain criminal miscellaneous petitions and may exercise power as per provisions laid down in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (Act No. 46 of 2023), and the Constitution of India.

13. Offence triable under the Competition: No offence other than an offence as defined and punishable under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 shall be allowed to be taken up by the student advocate for the purpose of participation in the competition.

14. Police stations: It is the discretion of the Student Advocate to choose the name of any Police station duly notified in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

15. Court fees:

- (i) In every petition, application, reply, affidavit, etc., wherever the court fee is required, the court fee shall be pasted by the student advocate.
- (ii) Only the court fee shall be pasted wherever required and other fees like welfare ticket etc. shall be deemed to be pasted in every application/petition.
- (iii) The amount of the court fee shall not be entered. It shall be deemed that wherever a court fee is pasted, it is pasted at the accurate value.



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- (iv) No student advocate shall be required to pay any actual fee to the Registry during filing or attestation.

16. Mode of the Proceedings:

- (i) All the proceedings, including miscellaneous rounds and finals, shall be conducted offline in the University Campus only at designated courts.
- (ii) The Registry may allow any proceedings except finals, through video conferencing in exceptional circumstances.

Provided that the Registry shall not be responsible for any adverse effect, including connectivity issues, privacy concerns, showing documents/evidence to the judge, and time management.

- (iii) For the purpose of this Rule, the Registry may take any decision through a Notification that shall be final and binding.

17. Time-bound proceedings:

No proceedings of this competition shall be time-bound.

Provided that the presiding judge shall have the final authority to increase or decrease the time limit.

18. Specific provisions as to Rounds:

- (i) Round I shall be submitted in .pdf format.
- (ii) In Round II, III, IV, Final Round, and miscellaneous proceedings, if required by the Presiding Officer of the Court, the student advocate may play the role of the victim, investigation officer, and the accused.

Explanation: During any stage of the competition, if the court permits, the student advocate as Public Prosecutor will play the role of the victim and the investigation officer, both, and the student advocate as Defence Counsel will play the role of the accused.

- (iii) In Round III and IV, not more than 10 witnesses shall be allowed from respective sides, the Prosecution and the Defence.
- (iv) In Round III and IV, there shall be no limit on the number of witnesses that may be allowed from respective sides, i.e. Prosecution and Defence. However, a maximum of only 5 witnesses from the Prosecution's side shall be examined in the Courtroom physically (offline medium). This maximum number shall be 3 in the case of Defence Evidence. The remaining witnesses (both Prosecution and Defence) shall be examined online via an Online Communication medium as notified by the OC.
- (v) In examinations of witnesses (online as well as offline) shall be subject to the



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provisions of Rule 17 of this Code.

CHAPTER IV: MISCELLANEOUS PROCEEDINGS

19. Filing of Miscellaneous Applications:

- (i) Any student advocate may file a miscellaneous application or petition before any court as per the provisions laid down under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

Except as otherwise provided in this Code, proceedings in r/o miscellaneous application/petition shall be taken up as per relevant applicable law, including the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, &/or the Constitution of India.

- (ii) The miscellaneous application can be filed from the date of registration of F.I.R. till the conclusion of the Defense Evidence stage in the respective case.
- (iii) The miscellaneous application cannot be filed on the day when any proceeding on the respective case is scheduled in the competition. [see **Fourth Schedule**.]

20. Restriction on filing of miscellaneous application:

A participant who has been eliminated from the competition cannot file any miscellaneous application.

21. Subject matter of miscellaneous application and its evaluation:

- (i) No miscellaneous application/petition can be filed except as allowed under:
 - a. The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (Act No. 46 of 2023).
 - b. Article 226 / Article 227 of the Constitution of India.
- (ii) The miscellaneous application shall be filed in soft copy (.pdf format).
- (iii) Miscellaneous applications will be listed before a competent court as per applicable law.
- (iv) Pleading of miscellaneous application will be evaluated as per the details laid down in the Seventh Schedule.
- (v) Score awarded to student advocates in proceedings on miscellaneous applications will not be considered in the Merit List of the same round; it will be considered in the Merit List prepared in the next round of the competition.

22. Proceedings in miscellaneous rounds:

The oral pleading of the miscellaneous application shall be conducted through offline mode in the designated courts at HPNLU Shimla.

23. Power of Registry in respect of miscellaneous applications:

- (i) The Registry shall have the power to fix the duration for filing of miscellaneous applications.



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- (ii) The Registry may extend the jurisdiction of filing of the applications.
- (iii) The Registry may issue a notification in respect of any matter concerning the miscellaneous applications.

CHAPTER V: EVALUATION, ELIMINATION, & JUDGES

24. Eligibility to become a judge:

The OC may approach either of the following persons to play the role of the judge during any proceeding to be conducted in the competition:

- (i) An advocate, or
- (ii) Judge or retired judges of any court in India, or
- (iii) A law graduate with an experience of three years or more, or who is an associate or partner in a law firm, or
- (iv) A teacher of law.

25. Quorum:

In all the proceedings, except in the case of the following, there shall be a single judge presiding over the proceedings in the court.

- (i) In case of any petition/application listed either before the High Court or before the Supreme Court, proceedings may be presided over by a two/three three-judge bench.
- (ii) In the final rounds, the trial may be presided over by two or more judges.
- (iii) The OC shall constitute the Bench whenever it is needed in each case.

26. Evaluation & Elimination

- (i) Each student advocate shall be evaluated at each stage in accordance with the score plan as explained in the **Fifth Schedule**.
- (ii) Registry shall disclose the Merit List to the student advocates after declaring the result of the respective round.
- (iii) Registry will share the Score Sheet (document on which Judges will award the score) with the respective student advocate.
- (iv) Merit List will be prepared on the basis of the Scaling Process, which is explained in the **Sixth Schedule**.
- (v) There shall be elimination at the following stages:
 - a) conclusion of the cognisance stage,
 - b) conclusion of framing of charge stage,
 - c) conclusion of the prosecution evidence stage, &
 - d) conclusion of the defense evidence stage.



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- (vi) Elimination at each stage will be done on the basis of the Merit List prepared at the respective stage of the competition.

CHAPTER VI: WORKSHOPS AND ATTENDANCE

27. Workshops:

- (i) The Registry will organise workshops before each proceeding under the HTAC.
- (ii) Resource person will be an expert from the Bar, or a sitting / retired judge, or a police officer.

28. Briefing session:

- (i) The Registry shall hold a briefing session with all the student advocates before each stage of the competition.
- (ii) This briefing session will explain the process of the upcoming stage in detail and will answer queries of the student advocates, if there are any.
- (iii) It is mandatory for each student advocate to attend all the briefing sessions.
- (iv) A faculty mentor of the student advocate may also attend the briefing session.

29. Identity card:

Each student advocate and their witnesses, at all rounds, shall carry their own University ID card, which he/she shall have to keep for the purpose of entering the Court Room and for other identification purposes.

CHAPTER VII: CODE OF CONDUCT

30. Decorum of the court:

All student advocates are expected to maintain decorum in the court, including the High Court and the Supreme Court, during the competition and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the legal profession.

31. Dispute Redressal and Disciplinary Committee:

Any dispute related to the competition, including disciplinary complaints, shall be referred to the Dispute Resolution Committee [DRC]. The OC shall notify the DRC, as & when required.

- (i) The DRC shall consist of the following:
 - a. Chairperson, HTAC;



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- b. Dean Academic Affairs;
- c. One law teacher nominated by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor.

32. Misconduct:

- (i) Where, on receipt of a complaint or otherwise, the OC has reason to believe that any student advocate has been guilty of any misconduct, it shall refer the case for disposal to the DRC.
- (ii) Without prejudice to acts of indiscipline prescribed under HPNLU Regulations, and the misconduct as applicable in case of an advocate as per applicable law, including the Advocates Act, 1961, the following conduct of the student advocate may be termed as misconduct:
 - a) **False complaint:** A student advocate who files a false complaint against any other student advocate, any member of the OC / Registry (including a volunteer), without any reasonable ground, commits misconduct under this section.
 - b) **Defamation:** A student advocate, by words either spoken or intended to be read, or by signs or by visible representations, makes or publishes any imputation concerning any participant or any member of the OC (including volunteer) in whole or in part intending to harm, or knowing or having reason to believe that such imputation will harm, the reputation of such person, is said to defame that person.
 - c) **Bribe:** A student advocate who offers, or gives, a bribe in any form including money, to or from any participant or member of OC (including a volunteer) for the purpose of bribing or undue advantage in the competition, commits "bribe"
 - d) **Fraud:** A student advocate who gives, prepares, or fabricates false information or documents commits "fraud".
 - e) **Interpolation:** A student advocate who manipulates the court, or otherwise interpolates in the judgment, or order, commits "interpolation".
 - f) **Forgery:** A student advocate who forges a document with the intention of or having the knowledge to mislead the Court or the Registry, commits forgery.
 - g) **Giving false information:** A student advocate who lies in any court, including the High Court, Registry or to the OC (including a volunteer) is said to have committed misconduct under this provision.

33. Procedure and powers of the DRC:

- (i) The DRC shall observe rules of natural justice in all its proceedings and shall



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dispose of the matters within 2 weeks from the date of receipt of the complaint/information.

- (ii) The DRDC, after giving both the parties an opportunity of being heard, may make one or more of the following orders, namely: –
- Dismiss the complaint; or,
 - Reprimand the student advocate, or any other party to the case; or,
 - Expel the student advocate from the competition; or,
 - Any other order it may deem fit.

CHAPTER VIII: OF MISCELLANEOUS

34. Organising Committee: The Organising Committee (OC) shall consist of the following:

- Chairperson HTAC.
- Faculty members nominated to HTAC.
- Five Student Coordinator (Nominated by the Chairperson HTAC).

35. Registry, Court Officials, and Oath Commissioner:

- The OC will constitute the Registry with a Registrar, two Deputy Registrars, and as many a Court Masters cum Stenographers as may require.
- The Registry shall have its own seal in the name of Registrar, HTAC Registry;
- The OC will appoint two Oath Commissioners for the purpose of compliance with any provision as laid down under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023;
- The duty of the Registrar / Deputy Registrar will be to organise the courtroom proceedings and to issue notifications in r/o the HTAC.
- Duty of the Court Masters will be to get the court orders typed, verified from the respective judge, and then to issue the same.
- The duty of the stenographer will be to take orders from the judge during proceedings, including typing the examination & cross-examination of any witness, and typing orders of the court.

Explanation: The OC may authorise a Court Master to perform the duties of a Stenographer in addition to his duties as court master.

36. Presumption as to communication: Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere, any communication duly served by the Registry *via* email or WhatsApp shall be deemed to have been delivered and acknowledged by the student advocate.

37. Role of the Student Advocate: Except as otherwise provided in this Code, the student advocate will have to perform the following roles and duties:



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- (i) To create his/her own hypothetical story consisting of a cognizable offence as defined and made punishable under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and is triable exclusively by the Court of Session.
Explanation: The hypothetical story may further consist of a non-cognizable offence; it may further consist of an offence which is triable by a Judicial Magistrate.
- (ii) To prepare a witness to play the role of the Investigation Officer, and to perform all the duties & to exercise all the powers provided to him as provided in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- (iii) To prepare all necessary documents required while investigating the matter and to submit the same as per Sec. 193 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- (iv) To play the role of the Public Prosecutor during trial stage, including performing all duties and exercising all powers provided under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- (v) To play the role of the Defense Counsel as and when required during different stages of the competition.
- (vi) To prepare a witness to play the role of the accused as and when required during different stages of the competition.
- (vii) To prepare Prosecution Witnesses (PW) for the purpose of examination and cross-examination during the trial stage of the competition; it includes ensuring that Prosecution Witnesses appear before the Court during proceedings.
- (viii) To prepare Defense Witnesses (DW) for the purpose of examination and cross-examination during the trial stage of the competition; it includes ensuring that Defense Witnesses appear before the Court during proceedings.
- (ix) During role-play, 'gender of the witness' vis-à-vis 'gender of the person' playing the role of the witness shall not be in question.

Note: *The entry of any witnesses in the college premises and their timely presence in their respective courtrooms shall be strictly managed by their respective student advocates. The OC will take no responsibility whatsoever regarding the entry or for the conduct of the witnesses.*

These rules have to be strictly followed, and any contravention of these rules would lead to the deduction of the marks of Student Advocates or their permanent termination from the competition.

38. Preparing the case-file/TCR and its allotment: The case-file to be used during proceedings in the competition shall be prepared in the following way:



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- (i) Student advocate, as Investigation Officer, will prepare his/her charge-sheet report that includes every document prepared by the Investigation Officer during the investigation.
- (ii) As & when a magisterial order / judicial order is passed by the Court, it will be issued to the respective student advocate by the Registry.
- (iii) The trial court record (TCR/case-file) will be maintained by the respective student advocate as well as by the Registry.
- (iv) Registry will get a statement recorded of the witnesses during the trial stage, and the typed version of the same will be shared with the respective student advocates.
- (v) A case file will be allotted to the student advocates for the purpose of their playing the role of the Defense Counsel at various stages of the competition.

Explanation: Kindly refer Eighth Schedule of this Code for further details.

39. Exception clause: Provision/s related to 'confession by the accused', 'plea of guilty by the accused', & / or 'plea bargaining', as laid down in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, are not permissible to be used in this competition.

40. Ambiguity in the Code & Its Interpretation: In case any ambiguity in any of the Rule/s is required to be clarified by the Chairperson of the OC in writing. The Registry will notify the clarification via email.

Explanation: Either member of the OC, the Registry, or the student advocate may bring any ambiguity in the existing Rule/s to the notice of the OC by writing an email at htac@hpnlu.ac.in

41. Awards:

The awards of the competition shall be given in accordance with **the Seventh Schedule.**

42. Removal of Difficulty Clause:

If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Code, the OC may, by notification, make such provisions, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Code, as may appear to be necessary for removing the difficulty.



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THE FIRST SCHEDULE

HTAC 1.0: CALENDER 2025-26

EVENT & MODE		SCHEDULE
APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS		
Notification – Inviting Application for Pre-registration	Online	July 11, 2025
Filling of Online Application– Last Date (Statement of Purpose-SOP)	Online	July 25, 2025
Interaction (If required)	Offline	August 18, 2025
Declaration of Final Result of Selection	Online	August 20, 2025
Orientation & Briefing Session by HTAC	Offline	August 30, 2025
PRE-INVESTIGATION PROCESS		
1 st Workshop: Registration of FIR	Offline	September 6, 2025
Meeting the First Informant, filing of FIR and Report u/s 176 BNSS	Online	September 7-15, 2025
2 nd Workshop: The Investigation	Offline	September 20, 2025
3 rd Workshop: The Filing of Police Report	Offline	October 18, 2025
Filing of Police Report (Charge-sheet) u/s 193 before a competent court	Online	October 30, 2025
COGNIZANCE AND COMMITMAL OF CASE TO SESSIONS		
Cognizance u/s 210 BNSS (Order shall be passed by the Magistrate)		October 30, 2025
Exchange of Trial Court Record (TCR) with Defense Counsel (For Framing of Charge Stage)	Online	October 30, 2025



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ARGUMENT ON FRAMING OF CHARGES		
Arguments –Framing of Charge	Offline	November 1-15, 2025
Result – Framing of Charge Stage	Online	November 20, 2025
COMPLETION OF THE FIRST STAGE AND ELIMINATION		
PROSECUTION EVIDENCE STAGE		
Exchange of TCR with Defense Counsel(for PE Stage)	Online	November 20, 2025
4 th Workshop: Procedure and Art of Examination at Prosecution Evidence Stage	Offline	January, 2026
Prosecution Evidence (Examination-in-Chief, Cross-Examination, and Re-Examination of Witnesses; Production of Evidence to get it Exhibited)	Online	February, 2026
	Offline	1 st half of March, 2026
Result – PE Stage	Online	1 st half of March, 2026
Exchange of TCR for DE Stage	Online	1 st half of March, 2026
COMPLETION OF THE SECOND STAGE AND ELIMINATION		
DEFENCE EVIDENCE STAGE		
5 th Workshop: Procedure and Art of Examination at Defense Evidence Stage	Offline	1 st half of April 2026
Recording Statement of Accused u/s 351 BNSS.	Offline	
Defense Evidence (Examination-in-chief, Cross-Examination, and Re-Examination of Witnesses. Production of Evidence to get it exhibited)	Offline	1 st half of April 2026
Result – Defense Evidence Stage	Online	2 nd half of April, 2025



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COMPLETION OF THE SECOND STAGE AND ELIMINATION		
Exchange of TCR File for Final Arguments	Online	April, 2025
FINAL ARGUMENTS STAGE		
Workshop on Final Arguments	Offline	2 nd half of April, 2026
Filing of Memo of Arguments u/s 352 BNSS	Online	2 nd half of April, 2026
Final Arguments	Offline	2 nd half of April, 2026
VALEDICTORY		End of April, 2025

* The dates are subject to change due to any unavoidable circumstances.



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THE SECOND SCHEDULE

(See Rule 37 & 38)

➤ Student Advocate as Investigation Officer

Stage: 'Cognizance by the Police' to 'Submission of Police Report'

- All the student advocates will play the role of Investigation Officer and submit Preliminary Documents (complaint + FIR + Report under BNSS) by the designated date.
- Around 01-month time will be given for preparing the documents that an Investigation Officer would have prepared while investigating the matter;
- Police Report will be submitted by the deadline given by the Registry.

➤ Student Advocate as Public Prosecutor and Defense Counsel

Stage: Arguments on Framing of Charge

Exchange of Police Report among the participants the following way:

- If there are four student advocates, Ms. A, Ms. B, Mr. C, & Mr. D; they will play the role of PP in their respective cases;
- Police Report of Ms. A will be shared with Ms. B; Ms. B's Police Report will be shared with Mr. C; Police Report of Mr. C will be shared with Mr. D; and Mr. D's
- Police Report will be shared with Ms. A. It means Ms. A is PP in her own case, and she will be Defence counsel in Mr. D's case; the other three will also play their respective roles accordingly.

Cause-List will appear like this:

Sl. No.	Title of the Case	Public Prosecutor	Defense Counsel	Date of Hearing
1	State v.	Ms. A	Ms. B	To be notified
2	State v.	Ms. B	Mr. C	
3	State v.	Mr. C	Mr. D	
4	State v.	Mr. D	Ms. A	

During competition, allotment of the matter to Defense Counsels will be done through Online / Chit System only; all the student advocates shall be invited to participate in the said process.



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Stage: Prosecution Evidence

Exchange of case files among the student advocates in the following way:

- If there are four participants, Ms. A, Ms. B, Mr. C, & Mr. D, they will play the role of PP in their respective cases.
- Case-file/TCR of Ms. A will be shared with Mr. D; Ms. B's case-file will be shared with Ms. A; case-file of Mr. C will be shared with Ms. B; and Mr. D's case-file will be shared with Mr. C;
- It means Ms. A is PP in her own case, and she will be Defence counsel in Mr. D's case; the other three will also play their respective roles accordingly.

Cause-List will appear like this:

Sl. No.	Title of the Case	Public Prosecutor	Defense Counsel	Date of Hearing
1	State v.	Ms. A	Mr. D	To be notified
2	State v.	Ms. B	Ms. A	
3	State v.	Mr. C	Ms. B	
4	State v.	Mr. D	Mr. C	

Stage: Defense Evidence

The same process shall be repeated at this stage of the competition.

Stage: Final Arguments Same process shall be repeated at this stage of the competition.

Kindly Note:

- Whenever a case file is exchanged, it will be ensured that no two student advocates are opposing counsels in their respective cases, e.g., it will not be allowed that Ms. A is Defense Counsel in Ms. B's case, and Ms. B is Defense Counsel in Ms. A's case;
- It will also be ensured that, as Defense Counsel, the student advocate gets new case whenever case-files are exchanged, e.g., if Ms. A was Defense Counsel in Ms. B's case at framing of charge stage, then Ms. A will not be allowed to be Defense Counsel in same case at either of the future proceedings, i.e., Prosecution Evidence, Defense Evidence, & Final Arguments.
- In case of any conflict between the said two situations, 1st one shall be



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allowed to prevail.

- (iv) It will be also ensured that two cases of the same student advocate is not scheduled on the same date; two cases can be scheduled on two consecutive dates, but not on the same date.

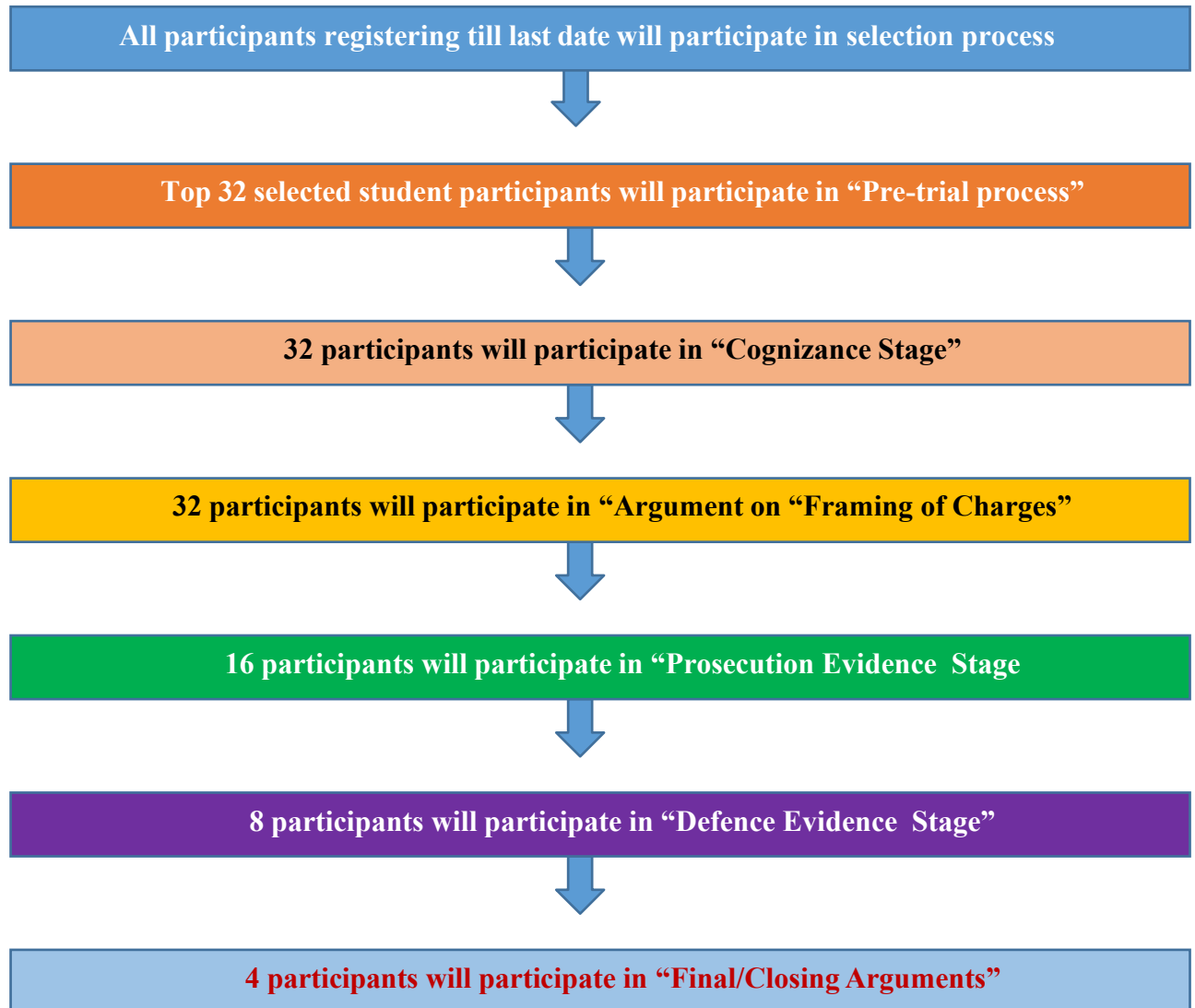


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THE THIRD SCHEDULE

Tentative Number of Participants Entitled to Participate in Consecutive Stages





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THE FOURTH SCHEDULE

(See Rule 19-22)

EVALUATION OF MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATIONS & THE MERIT LIST

Kindly take notice of the following:

- Subject to the provisions laid down in this Code and the BNSS, 2023, a miscellaneous application, except bail / anticipatory bail application/writ petition, will be evaluated for 10 marks.
- Bail / anticipatory bail application will be evaluated for 20 marks.
- The writ petition will be evaluated for 30 marks.
- It will be listed before a competent court within a week of its filing, or on the scheduled date of hearing of a regular proceeding, whichever is earlier.
- Score awarded in r/o pleadings on miscellaneous application will not be considered in the Merit List to be prepared for the upcoming round of the competition; it will be considered in the Merit List to be prepared for the next round of the competition.
- Cut-off date for above said purpose will be 'date of filing the miscellaneous application', not the date when it is listed or it is heard.



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THE FIFTH SCHEDULE (See Rule 27)

SCHEME FOR EVALUATION

Round	Stage	Score (Evaluation)	Brought Forward (from Previous Stage)	Score (Merit List)	Carried Forward (to Next Stage)
I	Pre-Trial (Registration of FIR to Filing of Charge-sheet Report)	100	N/A	100	50 (50% Score from Round I)
II	Framing of Charge	50 (30 as PP; 20 as DC)	50 (50% Score from Round I)	100	50 (50% Score from Round II)
III	Prosecution Evidence	200 (100 as PP; 100 as DC)	50 (50% Score from Round II)	250	(40% Score from Round III)
IV	Defense Evidence	100 (50 as PP; 50 as DC)	100 (40% Score from Round III)	200	50 (25% Score from Round III)
Final Round	Final Arguments	200 (100 as PP; 100 as DC)	50 (25% Score from Round IV)	250	N/A



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PRE-TRIAL STAGE				
Meeting the Informant	Registering FIR	Charge-sheet Report	Cognizance	Total
10	10	70	10	100
(Application under BNSS, 2023) <i>In case cognisance is not taken by the Magistrate, the student advocate shall be eliminated from the HTAC. The cognisance stage is the evaluation of the Police Report submitted by the student advocate. A Magistrate, as appointed by the OC, will evaluate the Chargesheet for Max. 70 score.</i>				

FRAMING OF CHARGE STAGE		
As Public Prosecutor	As Defense Counsel	Total
30	20	50
<i>Each student advocate will be evaluated as Public Prosecutor in his/her own case, and as Defense Counsel in the case which is allotted to him/her.</i>		

PROSECUTION EVIDENCE STAGE		
As Public Prosecutor	As Defense Counsel	Total
100	100	200
<i>Each student advocate will be evaluated as Public Prosecutor in his/her own case, and as Defense Counsel in the case which is allotted to him/her.</i>		

(Submission)	
Role of Public Prosecutor	Role of Defense Counsel
The Public Prosecutor will submit the questions that may be asked during the trial court judge	Defense Counsel will submit an answer to the questions (document) submitted by the Public Prosecutor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It shall be presumed that the questions submitted by the Public Prosecutor have been asked to the accused by the trial court judge. This document shall not be evaluated, but Late submission will lead to a penalty with a deduction of 10 Marks scored in the final Merit List at the Prosecution Evidence Stage; and Non-submission of the same will lead to the elimination of the student advocate from the HTAC. 	



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DEFENSE EVIDENCE STAGE		
As Public Prosecutor	As Defense Counsel	Total
50	50	100
<i>Each student advocate will be evaluated as Public Prosecutor in his/her own case, and as Defense Counsel in the case which is allotted to him/her.</i>		

FINAL ARGUMENTS STAGE		
As Public Prosecutor	As Defense Counsel	Total
100 (80 – Oral Pleading, & 20 – Memorandum)	100 (80 – Oral Pleading, & 20 – Memorandum)	100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Each student advocate will be evaluated as Public Prosecutor in his/her own case, and as Defense Counsel in the case which is allotted to him/her.</i><i>Each student advocate will have to submit Memorandum before pleading in the final arguments.</i>		



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THE SIXTH SCHEDULE

(See Rule 27)

SCHEME FOR SCALING DOWN & PREPARING MERIT LIST

Scaling Down Process

Since judges evaluating the submission/performance of the student advocate may have a variance in their scoring pattern for whatever reason, the scaling down process aims to minimise such subjective matter. After careful observation of the scoring pattern of the evaluators, it has been found that maximum variation goes up to 10% only, which may be of great concern for the student advocate participating in the HTAC. Hence, this scaling-down process has been introduced.

Exception:

- (i) ***This process shall not be applied in r/o court room in which only one matter was listed.***
- (ii) ***This process shall not be applied in the Final Argument stage for the reason that the court will be presided over by a judge's bench, hence the issue supposed to be settled through the scaling down process is already catered to with the bench being headed by multiple judges.***

Scaling down of the Score

(Student Advocate as Public Prosecutor) & (Student Advocate as Public Prosecutor) Following shall be considered in the said process:

- Score awarded to the SA
- Average score awarded in the respective court of the SA
- Average score of all the courtrooms
- If average score awarded in respective court of the SA is 05% above (05% of Maximum Score at respective stage) or 05% less (05% of Maximum Score at respective stage) than average scored awarded in all the court-rooms, only then scaling process will be applied in score awarded to the SAs of that court room.
- Separate scaling down will be done in the r/o Public Prosecutor and Defense Counsel.

The formula for the scaling of scores:

- **If average score of court room \geq average score of all court rooms:**
$$\{\text{Score of Individual S.A.}\} \times \{(\text{Average Score of all the Courts}) + (05\%)\} / (\text{Average Score of Respective Court Room})$$



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- **If average score of court room \leq average score of all court rooms:**

{Score of Individual S.A.} x {(Average Score of all the Courts) - (05%)} / (Average Score of Respective Court Room). **Kindly see the illustration below**

Illustration – Scaling Down Process

Courtroom I		Courtroom II		Courtroom III		Courtroom IV		Courtroom V	
Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)
Ms.A	61	Ms.D	66	Mr.I	37	Ms.N	74	Mr.P	38
Ms.B	83	Mr.E	77	Mr.J	51	Mr.O	83	Ms.Q	62
Ms.C	83	Mr.F	79	Mr.K	46			Mr.R	59
		Mr.G	63	Ms.L	55			Ms.S	56
		Mr.H	78	Ms.M	50			Ms.T	60
Average	227/3 (76)		363/5 (73)		239/5 (48)		157/2 (79)		275/5 (55)

Score Sheet (Awarded by the Judges)

Average Score @ Court Room II
 Average Score @ Court Room II
 Average Score @ Court Room III
 Average Score @ Court Room IV
 Average Score @ Court Room V

Average Score @ All Courtrooms

Prosecution Side

=76
 = 73
 = 48
 = 79
 = 55
= 63

Formula of scaling of score:

If the average score of the courtroom \geq the average score of all courtrooms:

**{Score of Individual S.A.} x {(Average Score of All the Courts) + (05%)} /
 (Average Score of Respective Court Room)**



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If the average score of the courtroom \leq the average score of all courtrooms:

$$\{ \text{Score of Individual S.A.} \} \times \{ (\text{Average Score of All the Courts}) - (05\%) \} / (\text{Average Score of Respective Court Room})$$

Scaled Score Sheet (Public Prosecutor)

Courtroom I		Courtroom II		Courtroom III		Courtroom IV		Courtroom V	
Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)	Name of S.A.	Score (100)
Ms.A	55	Ms.D	61	Mr.I	45	Ms.N	64	Mr.P	40
Ms.B	74	Mr.E	72	Mr.J	62	Mr.O	71	Ms.Q	65
Ms.C	74	Mr.F	74	Mr.K	56			Mr.R	62
		Mr.G	59	Ms.L	66			Ms.S	59
		Mr.H	73	Ms.M	60			Ms.T	63
A similar calculation will be done for the Defence Counsel as well.									

Kindly note the following:

- Once the proceedings of the respective courts get over, the scaling down process will be applied in score-sheets of all the courtrooms, except the courtroom wherein only one matter was listed & heard.
- Once the Scaled Score Sheet is prepared, each student advocate will be awarded a score accordingly.
- Merit List will be prepared on the basis of 'Scaled Score Sheet' + 'Score Brought Forward' (wherever it is applicable);
- This Merit List will be considered for elimination purposes at the respective round.
- Score-sheet (scanned copy of the original score sheet) will be shared with the respective student advocate.
- Score Sheet (Awarded by the Judges) will be shared with all the student advocates.
- Scaled Score Sheet will be shared with all the student advocates.



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SEVENTH SCHEDULE

(See Rule 41)

AWARD / REWARD

Sl. No.	Stage of the HTAC	Category	Award / Reward
1	Final (Final Arguments)	Winner	Total Prize Money will be of Rs. 30,000/- (Kindly see the Note*) Along with the Winner's Trophy and Certification
2		Winner	
3		1 st Runner-up	
4		2 nd Runner-up	
5		3 rd Runner-up	

** It will be shared with the 04 Finalists commensurate with their Final Score. E.g., if the Final Score of 04 Finalists is: 80/100, 75/100, 72/100, & 65/100; the total prize money of Rs. 30,000/ will be shared amongst them as per the ratio of their score, i.e. 80:75:72:65 [Rs. 8200/-; 7700/-; 7400/-; and 6700 respectively].*