



WOMEN IN LAW  
INITIATIVE PAKISTAN



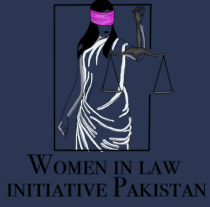
# A GUIDE TO SC CLERKSHIP PROGRAMME

## PAKISTAN

2024-25

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## Special Thanks

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# HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

## CLERKSHIP OF THE SUPREME COURT

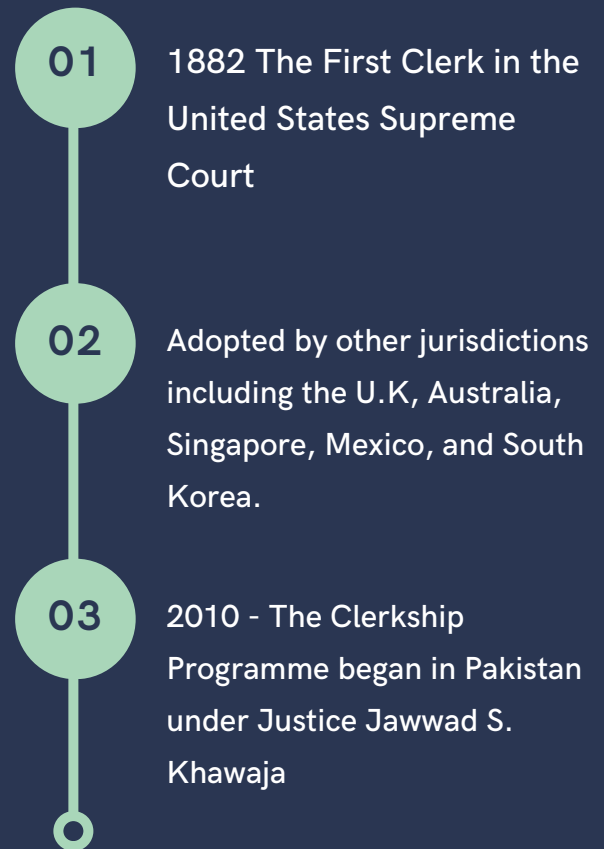
The Supreme Court of Pakistan started its Clerkship Programme in 2010 under Hon'ble Justice (r) Jawwad S. Khawaja. In 2012, the first open call for application to the clerkship programme was announced and the programme was formalised.

While still young, the Supreme Court of Pakistan's Law Clerkship program has provided the opportunity for over a hundred young Pakistani lawyers to work on complex and historic cases before the Hon'ble Court, learn from the guidance of their respective Judges, and go on to excel.

Of these, 49% have been female while 51% have been male till date. In last two years, from 2022 onwards, more females have qualified and joined as law clerks than their male counterparts.

Alumni of the Supreme Court Law Clerkship Program have secured scholarships at graduate programs in the top law schools in the world and built successful legal practices.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads\\_judgements/all\\_downloads/law\\_clerkship/A\\_background\\_of\\_the\\_Supreme\\_Court\\_Law\\_Clerkship\\_Program.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads_judgements/all_downloads/law_clerkship/A_background_of_the_Supreme_Court_Law_Clerkship_Program.pdf)



# ABOUT THE PROGRAMME<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A LAW CLERK?

The Honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan's Law Clerkship Program aims to cultivate the next generation of lawyers and jurists of Pakistan by providing a unique opportunity for professional growth and unparalleled mentorship.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan is an equal opportunity employer and encourages diverse applications without compromising on merit. Presently a majority of law clerks are women, and all provinces of Pakistan and Islamabad Capital Territory are represented.

A law clerk (also called judicial law clerk or judicial associate) is a lawyer- typically a recent law graduate - who provides direct assistance to a judge. The position is internationally considered to be among the most prestigious in the field of law, grooming young lawyers to go on to succeed in their respective fields, and give back to their country.

Most Supreme Courts today have law clerkship programs, hiring top recent law graduates to work directly with their judges.

Each Law Clerk will be allocated to and work directly for a Hon'ble Judge of the Supreme Court and will be expected to perform the following duties: -

- 1) Research, analyse and prepare briefs on a wide range of legal issues;
  - 2) Prepare bench memoranda cases being heard by the Hon'ble Judge;
  - 3) Assist in drafting judgments and orders;
  - 4) Prepare opinions as and when required;
  - 5) Ensure that case law cited and relied on by counsel and the bench is good law and keep the Hon'ble Judge up to date on significant changes in law;
  - 6) Assist the Chamber staff in executing instructions and tasks;
  - 7) Review and proofread all judgments, orders and other documents;
- and
- 8) Carry out any other miscellaneous task as and when required.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads\\_judgements/all\\_downloads/law\\_clerkship/A\\_background\\_of\\_the\\_Supreme\\_Court\\_Law\\_Clerkship\\_Program.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads_judgements/all_downloads/law_clerkship/A_background_of_the_Supreme_Court_Law_Clerkship_Program.pdf)

# APPLICATION PROCESS

## STEP BY STEP GUIDE

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### DEADLINE

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AUGUST 25, 2024, AT 11:59 PM

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### EMAIL

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1. Application form must be filled digitally and sent to [scplawclerks@gmail.com](mailto:scplawclerks@gmail.com) along with all corresponding documents, personal statement, and essays.
2. One clearly labelled email, along with clearly labelled documentation. For example: Bilquees Bano Vardag - Law Clerkship Application 2024-2025.
3. List down each document that has been attached, clearly setting out the relevance of any additional documents that support your application.

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## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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1. Applicant shall be a citizen of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
2. Applicant must be the age of 28 years or below.
3. Applicant must have completed the undergraduate degree in law (or any equivalent degree). The Degree can be both Local and International.
4. Applicants in their final year of university awaiting their final results may also apply but will be required to submit proof of fulfilling all graduation requirements as well as transcripts for all semesters.
5. Applicant shall apply for this Clerkship Programme within a period of four (4) years of completion of the undergraduate degree in law.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. Two Reference Letters: Preferably one academic, one professional.
2. Referee must know you for at least 1 year, not related to you.
3. Who to Ask: Ask your professors or a work supervisor!
4. Verification: Letters must be signed; referees may be contacted.

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## DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

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1. Application form;
2. Personal Statement and Essay Questions;
3. Candidate's CNIC;
4. Educational certificates including O-Level/Matriculation & A-Level/Intermediate (or any other equivalent Board) certificates, university transcripts and graduation degree certificate;
5. Resume;
6. Certificates/Awards;
7. Provide one line explanations of any certifications you provide.
8. 2 reference letters; and
9. Any other document the Candidate relies upon in this application such as bar licenses/memberships etc.
10. Submit all the documents in PDF format.



## PERSONAL STATEMENT

Start by introducing yourself, focusing on your journey into the field of law. Highlight your passion and interest in law, and how this passion has driven your academic and professional pursuits. Mention any challenges or hardships you've faced along the way and how overcoming them has strengthened your resolve and capabilities in the legal field.

Discuss your motivations for applying to the Supreme Court of Pakistan's Law Clerkship Program. Explain what attracts you to this specific position and how it aligns with your personal and professional goals. Consider mentioning how this experience will help you achieve your aspirations in the legal field.

Outline what you hope to achieve as a law clerk and how you envision your role in the program. Highlight the specific contributions you can make, such as your research skills, your ability to analyze complex legal issues, and your commitment to upholding the principles of justice. Share your vision for the program and how you plan to contribute to its success.

01

**About Yourself:** your journey, your passion in law, your struggles, your capabilities

02

**Your Interest:** motivations and purpose for applying to this position, what you aim to achieve from it, how will it further your personal or professional goals.

03

**Your Contributions:** what do you want to achieve as a law clerk, how do you view this role and how would you contribute to it, what is your vision for this program?

 **Tip:** Be as authentic as you can. Don't try to write what you think they would want to hear.

# ESSAY QUESTIONS

## TIPS ON ATTEMPTING THE QUESTIONS

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You will be required to answer four essay questions, each with a strict 750-word limit. Adhering to the word limit is crucial, as exceeding it can result in negative marking. These questions are both analytical and research-based, requiring extensive studying and thorough research. Some will ask for your personal opinion, so be sure to apply your critical thinking and questioning skills.

When crafting your answers, ensure that they reflect your perspective, but back them up with solid research. Each response should include a clear thesis statement and a well-reasoned conclusion.

It's important to remember that the focus isn't on whether your answer is absolutely correct, but rather on how you arrive at your conclusions and how effectively you substantiate them.

As a Clerk you are required to be as concise as possible, which is what is tested in keeping the word limit this short. It is undesirable for a candidate to not adhere to instructions. Approach the questions by thinking that 600 or so other people are answering the same question. How can you stand out?

For each question, make sure to explore domestic jurisdiction and case law, while also considering foreign jurisdiction for questions 3 and 4. This will help you provide a comprehensive analysis and demonstrate a broad understanding of the legal landscape.

To achieve the best results, start early by creating separate research drafts for each question. Spend ample time drafting, reviewing, and editing your answers to ensure they are well-crafted and precise. Although the questions may seem broad and complicated, approach them with the mindset of a law clerk—this is an opportunity to showcase the analytical and research skills essential for the role.

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 **Tip:** Attempt the questions as if its the first assignment from the Judges.

# INTERVIEW

## PREPARATION

The interview is a test of your nerves. Questions can range from professional to your personal journey and motivations.

When meeting with the two Honourable Judges at the Principal Seat in Islamabad, focus on showing your legal knowledge and analysis skills.

Be ready to discuss complex legal topics and share your personal insights.

Stay calm and confident, and be prepared for any surprises. This will help you present yourself well and make a strong impression.

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Tip: Have 1 or 2 specific questions for the Interview Committee regarding their work



Your recommendations should ideally not be generic so make sure whoever is writing it knows you well!

# KEY SKILLS

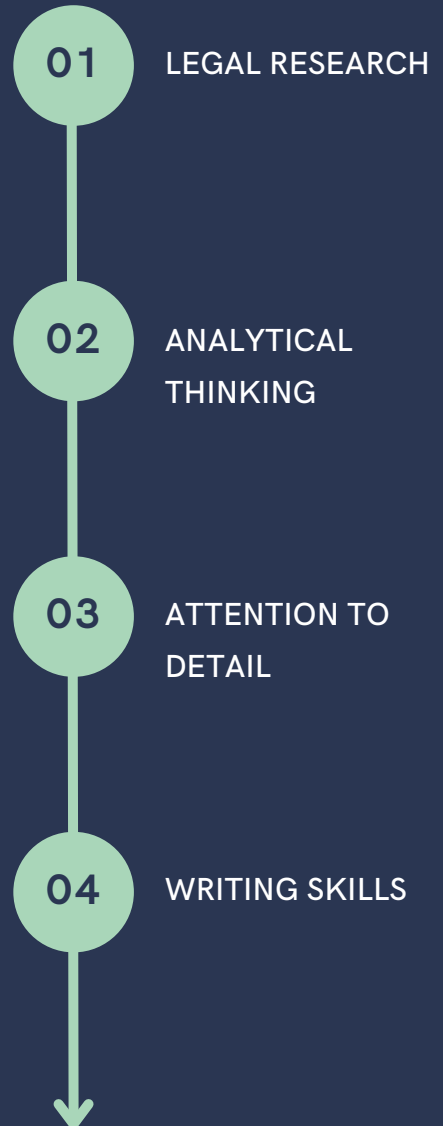
## YOU NEED TO LEARN FOR THIS ROLE

**Legal Research:** Ability to conduct thorough and precise legal research, including understanding statutes, precedents, and legal principles. This involves using legal databases, analyzing case law, and synthesizing complex legal information.

**Analytical Thinking:** Strong analytical skills to critically evaluate legal issues, identify key arguments, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of various positions. This includes the ability to distill complex legal matters into clear and concise points.

**Attention to Detail:** Meticulous attention to detail is required to ensure accuracy in legal documents, citation of sources, and application of legal principles. Small errors can have significant consequences in legal contexts.

**Writing Skills:** Exceptional legal writing skills are crucial. Law clerks must draft clear, well-organized, and persuasive opinions, memos, and briefs. Attention to detail and precision in language are vital.



**Time Management and Discipline:** The ability to manage time effectively and prioritize tasks is important, as law clerks often work under tight deadlines and need to handle multiple assignments simultaneously.

**Communication Skills:** Strong verbal communication skills are necessary for discussing legal issues with justices, other clerks, and legal professionals. Law clerks must be able to explain complex legal concepts clearly and concisely.

**Teamwork and Collaboration:** While much of the work is independent, law clerks must also collaborate effectively with justices, other clerks, and court staff. Being able to work as part of a team and contribute to collective problem-solving is important.

**Ethical Awareness:** A strong understanding of legal ethics and a commitment to upholding the integrity of the judicial process are fundamental. Law clerks must be aware of ethical considerations and avoid conflicts of interest.

**Adaptability:** The legal landscape can change rapidly, and law clerks need to be adaptable and open to new information, ideas, and legal developments. The ability to adjust to evolving circumstances is key.



# FAQS

## FROM THE CANDIDATES

### Q. WHAT DOES THE TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE FOR A LAW CLERK?

Ans: A typical day for a law clerk depends on the judge they are assigned to. It usually begins before court proceedings, involving case reviews and listings. Clerks attend court sessions, conduct research related to ongoing proceedings, and handle administrative tasks like drafting orders, attending meetings, and responding to emails. They may also prepare case summaries and attend conferences as part of their duties.

### Q. IS THERE ANY INITIAL TRAINING OR ONBOARDING PROCESS?

Ans: Yes, there is a one-month period for new clerks to learn their role, often facilitated by the out-going clerk. This training period may extend up to two months, with additional support from chamber staff to help new clerks navigate their responsibilities.

### Q. WHAT TO DO ABOUT ACCOMODATION? WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

Ans: The Supreme Court does not provide accommodation for law clerks. It is advisable to arrange housing with family or friends. Incoming clerks can seek guidance from their predecessors, who can offer advice on finding safe places to stay or reach out to other Clerks in their batch for joint search and other support in this process.

### Q. IS THERE ANY EXPERIENCE REQUIRED?

Ans: No specific experience is required. Law graduates fresh out of university or up to 4 years of PQE, under the age of 28, are eligible to apply.

### Q. THE QUESTIONS ARE VERY LONG BUT THE WORD LIMIT IS TOO SHORT. HOW DO YOU RECOMMEND ATTEMPTING THEM?

Ans: The short word limit tests your ability to articulate your thoughts concisely. Start by writing your full response without worrying about the limit, then edit and refine it to fit within the word count, focusing on clarity and precision.

### Q. WHAT IF YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR TRANSCRIPTS WITHIN THE TIME OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

Ans: If you don't have your transcripts, submit your university's internal documents or any proof that you have completed your LL.B qualifications and are awaiting your degree.

### Q. HOW MANY CITATIONS AND REFERENCES SHOULD WE ADD TO OUR ANSWERS?

Ans: Avoid overloading your answers with citations due to the word limit. While it's easy to cite cases or judges, it's best to keep references minimal unless they are crucial to your argument.



# TESTIMONIALS

## FROM THE PREVIOUS CLERKS

### TAYYABA KAKAR



LAW CLERK 2022 - 2024, QUETTA

I am honored to share my experience as a law clerk at the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Being selected among six clerks from across the country and working under Mr. Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan for two years was an invaluable experience. Returning to Quetta as the first female judicial law clerk from Balochistan was a milestone, paving the way for others from my region to reach the interview stage and even the Supreme Court.

I am also proud to be part of the newly established research center at the Balochistan High Court, where I continue to break barriers as the first female in this role. This position has allowed me to create pathways for others in judicial law clerking and consulting.

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## ALIZEH AKBAR MEER

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LAW CLERK 2022 - 2024, LAHORE

The law clerkship is a truly transformative experience. Beyond strengthening my legal knowledge and gaining insight into the judiciary, it also humanized the apex court judges for me in ways I hadn't expected. I had the chance to connect with peers from across Pakistan, learning and growing together in an inclusive, welcoming environment. For first-generation lawyers especially, I highly recommend the program—it's an opportunity that will shape both your career and your perspective.

# INTERESTED? APPLY NOW!

HEAD OVER TO THE WEBSITE AT:

<https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/situation-vacant-law-clerk/>



A Women in Law Initiative Pakistan Compilation

Based on 'SC Clerkship : Pathways and Perspective' Online Session held on August 15, 2024  
Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2GIDF7W6jQ&t=7s>