

REPORT ON MY SIWES PROGRAM AT UPPER AREA COURT, KWARA STATE

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Contents

CERTIFICATION.....	3
DEDICATION	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	5
1. INTRODUCTION	6
AIMS OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME.....	6
OBJECTIVES OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME.....	6
2. ABOUT THE INSTITUTION	6
ACTIVITIES OF THE COMPANY/INSTITUTION	6
JUDICIAL ACTIVITIES.....	6
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES	7
SPECIFIC JURISDICTION.....	7
OTHER FUNCTIONS.....	7
3. PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERNSHIP	8
CASES IN COURT	8
THE STAGES OF PROCEEDINGS IN COURT [CIVIL CASE]	9
EXAMPLE OF CIVIL CASE	9
CRIMINAL CASE.....	9
DIRECT COMPLAINT.....	10
FIRST INFORMATION REPORT FROM THE POLICE [FR]	10
THE STAGES OF PROCEEDINGS IN COURT [CRIMINAL CASE].....	10
HIERARCHY OF COURTS	11
4. SUMMARY OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME	12
HERE ARE A FEW TERMS I LEARNT IN DURING MY SIWES PROGRAMME	12
CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE SIWES	14
CONCLUSION.....	15

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this SIWES report was conducted and compiled by Shittu Teslimat Opeyemi with the matric no 22/15SCS020 to the department of sociology (criminology and security studies), Thomas Adewumi University, Oko-Irese Kwara State.

Supervisor's name

Signature and date

Head of department

Signature and date

DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to Almighty Allah, my parent and my judge that supported and guided me throughout my SIWES internship program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude goes to Almighty Allah whom alone deserves all my thanks in all ramifications of my life. I say to him alone who is worthy of my praise, be magnified, Amen!!!

Firstly, I appreciate my lovely parents for their great support towards my academics and all that concerns me. I pray you both live to witness my days, months and years of abundant of joys and blessings, Amen.

Secondly, I'm sending my sincere appreciate to my reputable HOD in person of DR DANIEL for his great direction and impact of knowledge. You are acknowledged as the father of the great department of sociology (Criminology and security studies) under the umbrella of the faculty of management and social sciences. Thank you sir for all you've done for me and God bless you abundantly sir, Amen!

Thirdly, I also appreciate DR DANIEL who came all the way from Thomas Adewumi University to supervise me at my place of internship (The upper area court Offa, Kwara State). I really appreciate your coming sir and really means a lot to me and thank God for returning you back safely. I also appreciate you personally for your impact of knowledge and understanding towards me.

Lastly, my sincere gratitude goes to my course mates, you all are amazing course mates that turn to be friends. I pray we all make it bigger and be proud of those amazing moments we shared as colleagues, Amen!!!

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents my experiences and observations during my students industrial work experience scheme [SIWES] at the upper area court Offa Kwara state is known as a justice institution which is located in secretariat road Offa Kwara state. The establishment of the court is to provide legal precedent, dispute resolution and justice to the people. Since the existence of the jurisdiction, several staff has been transferred and promoted by who are in charge to promote and transfer staff in the court.

AIMS OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME

- To develop professional contacts.
- To gain real work experience and provide meaningful assistance to the agency.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME

- To provide students with industrial skills and needed experience
- To create conditions and circumstances which can be as close as possible to the actual workflow
- To prepare specialists who will be ready for any working situation immediately after graduation
- To give students the ability to try and apply the given knowledge

2. ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

The Upper Area Court Offa Kwara State is also known as customary court. The court is located on Secretariat Road Offa, Kwara State.

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMPANY/INSTITUTION

JUDICIAL ACTIVITIES

- Hearing And Determining Civil And Criminal Cases

- Conducting Trial And Delivering Judgement
- Granting Injunctions Stay Of Proceedings
- Interpreting Laws And Resolving Disputes
- Reviewing And Appeals From Lower Court

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Case Management And Scheduling
- Maintaining Court Records And Documents
- Managing Court Staff And Resources
- Coordinating With Other Courts And Judicial Agency
- Budgeting And Financial Management

SPECIFIC JURISDICTION

- Family Law(Marriage, Divorce, Child Custody)
- Property And Land Dispute
- Contract And Commercial Dispute
- Criminal Cases
- Small Claims And Debt Recovery

OTHER FUNCTIONS

- Issuing Warrant And Summons
- Conducting Bail Hearings
- Providing Judicial Training And Workshops
- Collaborating With Law Enforcement Agencies

3. PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERNSHIP

During my internship, I learnt a lot about court proceedings where the court sits exactly at 9:00, where the judge sits is called THE BENCH next is the staff of the court and the next are two boxes one at the right hand side of the judge which is the APPLICANT box why the box at the judge left hand side is for the DEFENDANT. The next roll is called the BAR which is for the lawyers who are to be seated in court behind the bar is called the GALARY who are the public including the litigant and whoever is interested. The judge will signal to the registry or the staff of the court who is present in court to call the cases and the senior most lawyers are to call their case first [NB: The junior lawyer can call their cases first with the permission of the senior most lawyer]. In the ethics of the legal practitioner there is hierarchy when calling cases.

AGF- Attorney general of the federation

CASES IN COURT

CIVIL CASE

It is a legal argument between an individual, organization, or government entities, seeking resolution or compensation for harm, injury, or damage.

Types of civil case

1. Possession
2. Tenancy
3. Divorce
4. Bank Order

THE STAGES OF PROCEEDINGS IN COURT [CIVIL CASE]

- Mention stage : Why do you bring the plaintiff or respondent to court
- Hearing
- Defense
- Judgement

EXAMPLE OF CIVIL CASE DIVORCE

When a complainant comes to court they will head straight to the registrar's office to make complaint. The complainant will tell the registrar everything about their complaint then the registrar will help those who are illiterate to write a statement of everything they've said [which is mostly the case in where I did my SIWES program], then the registrar will ask the complainant to go and print out the statement, but those who are literate to go and print out their statement directly without him helping them to write it. A new court case file will be open, then the case file will be given a suit number. Then the registrar will attach the judicial seal to the statement in order to authenticate it. The complainant will be given a date to come back for mention. Three photocopies of the statement with the judicial seal for service, endorsement and return. The bailiff will be sent to go for the service and endorsement and return to the defendant. The defendant will be given the service and the defendant will be asked to sign the endorsement for return. Then when the bailiff is back will the endorsement and return the registrar will file it.

CRIMINAL CASE

A Criminal case is a legal proceeding where an individual, the state or federal government accused an individual or organization of committing a crime. Example, Murder, theft, traffic offence. Criminal sentences can lead to imprisonment, community service or fines etc. There are two types of criminal cases in court. They are:

1. Direct Complaint
2. First Information report from the police [FR].

DIRECT COMPLAINT

This is a written statement made by a victim or complaint directly to the court, by the police. This is typically done when police refuse to register an FIR or the victim feels the police may not investigate partially. How to file a direct complaint.

New Case: Direct criminal complaint against Mr x for adultery, threatening of life, rape contrary to section 387, 396, of the penal code law. The new file will be recorded inside the criminal log book and suit number will be given {UACF/CR/039/2024}. Criminal Summon and arrest warrant will the given to the police in court will be written to summon the and arrest the defendant to court.

FIRST INFORMATION REPORT FROM THE POLICE [FR]

Is a document prepared by the police when they receive information about a cognizable offense (serious offence). The police will bring the defendant to the court with the prosecutor for pre-trial before hearing the case on the given date.

NB- Summon is not written for [Fr] because the case is coming to the court directly and both complainant and defendant are present.

THE STAGES OF PROCEEDINGS IN COURT [CRIMINAL CASE]

- Mention stage : taking the plea of the defendant
- Hearing
- Ruling: On no case of submission, whether there is a case for the defendant to answer

NB: If there is no need to defend the case will be dismissed, that means the judge will pass judgement at this stage

- Adjourned for defense
- Adjourned for judgement: conviction and sentences

NB: After the hearing, the judge is set to pass judgement. However, before passing judgment, he will ask the defendant if he is guilty or not, after which the judge will pass his judgement.

HIERARCHY OF COURTS

- Supreme court
- Court of appeal

The above are superior court

- Federal high court
- State high court
- Sharia court of appeal

NOTE: Sharia court is strictly Muslim matters only for example; Divorce, Dissolution of marriage, Inheritance.

- Customary court of appeal
- National industrial court
- Court marshal

The above are called court of coordinate jurisdiction or sister court

- Sharia court

NB: Sharia court is strictly for Muslim matters only.

- Customary court also known as upper area court
- Magistrate court
- Area court

The following are lower courts.

4. SUMMARY OF STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME

My Internship training was done at the upper area court Offa, Kwara state. I started my SIWES program on 16th of July, 2024 in which I was introduced to the presiding judge at the court HONOURABLE I.A UMAR. During my internship, I learnt a lot about court proceedings and observed series of court session, including criminal case, civil case and Muslim matters. I assisted the court official with the documentation and engaged with judges, lawyers and court staff. I noted the courts efficiency in handling cases. Judges demonstrated fairness and impartiality. However, I observed delays in some proceedings. I faced challenges understanding complex court terminologies and maintaining confidentiality was also crucial. There are some are some common court terminology like;

- **PLAINTIFF:** The person or party initiating a lawsuit.
- **DEFENDANT:** The person or party being sued.
- **JURISDICTION:** The courts authority to hear a case.
- **COMPLAINT:** The initial document filed by the plaintiff.
- **SUMMONS:** Notice to the defendant to respond to the complaint.
- **TRIAL:** Presentation of evidence and testimony.
- **VERDICT:** The court's decision.
- **JUDGEMENT:** The official ruling.

N.B: In criminal cases, the person or party who initiate a lawsuit is called **COMPLAINANT** while in civil cases it is called **PLAINTIFF**. The person or party being sued in criminal case is called **RESPONDENT** or **ACCUSED** while in civil case it is called **DEFENDANT**. But the word **PETITIONER** and **RESPONDANT** can be used either in civil case or criminal case.

Sharia court is strictly Muslim matter only.

HERE ARE A FEW TERMS I LEARNT IN DURING MY SIWES PROGRAMME

FIAT CASE: This refers to a case where the hearing has commenced but not completed and the judge is unable to finish hearing the case due to circumstances an application may be made to

allow the same judge to continue hearing the case even if they have move to different location to maintain continuity and consistency in the case.

JUDICIAL SEAL: The judicial seal is an official emblem or stamp used by courts to authenticate documents, signify authority, and ensure legitimacy. It represent the court's jurisdiction and verifies the documents validity.

HEARING NOTICE: A hearing notice is a formal notification informing parties of an upcoming court hearing, including:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Purpose
- Relevant case details

QUIT NOTICE: A quit notice is letter issued out by the landlords for a tenant to pack out

ENDORSEMENT AND RETURN: Endorsement and return refer to the process where a document is endorsed [stamped or signed] by the court or clerk, the endorsed document is returned to the filing

SUIT NUMBER: Suit number refers to a unique identifier assigned to each legal case, typically

- Court code
- Year
- Sequential number

Example: UACF/CVF/54/2024 for civil case

UACF/CR/34/2024 for criminal case

UACF/CVM/23/2024 for Muslim

I learnt that in the court that we have three types of examination. They include:

- Examination: This type of examination refer to the process of questioning witnesses or parties. The purposes for this type of examination are: Establish facts, challenge credibility, gather evidence, clarify testimony and support or refute claims.
- Re-examination: This type of examination is also known as redirect examination, it is a type of examination that occurs during court proceedings. It allows the original party in a proceeding to:
 - I. Rebut points raised during cross examination
 - II. Clarify or expand on previous testimony
 - III. Address new issues raised during cross examination

The purpose for re-examination include:

- I. Restore credibility of witness/testimony
- II. Counter opposing party's challenges
- III. Provide additional context/evidence
 - Cross-examination: this type of examination is a crucial part of court proceedings, allowing the opposing party to challenge the testimony of a witness or expert.

The purpose of cross examination include:

- I. Discredit testimony
- II. Raise doubt
- III. Introduce alternative theories
- IV. Gather information

CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE SIWES

Some of the challenges I faced include;

- Understanding complex court terminology
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Adapting to court etiquette

CONCLUSION

My SIWES experience at the Upper Area Court Offa Kwara State was enlighten and enriching. I gained valuable insights into court operations and develop essential skills. The theoretical aspect such as having knowledge about the activities of the agency is part of my achievement as a SIWES student.