Nkiruka Esther Onyiri

VIRTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANT

Port Harcourt, Nigeria | onyirin41@gmail.com | LinkedIn

Profile Summary

Nigerian-qualified lawyer (called to the Bar in 2022) with three years of chambers experience in civil litigation, property and commercial work, now supporting UK firms remotely on UK hours (WAT, UTC+1). Runs the full legal-admin cycle: client intake, e-filing, diary and deadline control, billing, legal research and drafting. Clio Certified Administrator, trained as a Virtual Legal Assistant (VLA by Vivian), with working use of PracticePanther and Microsoft Office. LLM International Commercial Law (University of Salford), in progress.

Skills

- Organisation
- Attention to detail
- Multitasking
- Time management and prioritisation
- Client coordination
- Written communication
- Clio (Certified) and PracticePanther
- Word, Excel, Outlook
- Gmail, Zoom
- LawPavilion, Legalpedia, CompuLaw
- RIVCOMIS and chambers e-diary
- Hybrid records management

Experience

Associate | Damian O. Okoro (SAN) & Associates | Port Harcourt, Nigeria
2024 – Present

- **Client intake:** Coordinated onboarding of new clients through structured email, phone and text follow-ups for the documents each service required, securing complete document sets within 3 working days in about 90% of matters and cutting repeat document requests by around 40%.
- **E-filing (RIVCOMIS):** Filed court processes electronically on RIVCOMIS, the Rivers State Judiciary's e-filing platform, from upload and online fee payment to retrieving stamped copies, achieving 98% first-time acceptance across 150+ filings and reducing registry turnaround by about 60% against manual filing.
- **Calendar management:** Logged every matter on the chambers e-diary on receipt of the process, counting down the days remaining to file each process, so that 100% of filing deadlines were met across a caseload of 60+ active matters with no missed deadline in three years.
- **Scheduling:** Cross-checked physical diaries and e-calendars to prevent hearing clashes between courts inside and outside Rivers State, keeping lower-court dates clear of superior-court dates, and gave clients at least 5 days' notice of hearings and meetings by email and text, holding client attendance above 95%.
- **Billing:** Recorded client interview times, court appearances and services in a Microsoft Excel tracker as each matter progressed, applying the firm's court-appearance price list and the legal practitioners' remuneration schedule, and compiled the Bill of Charges from the log within 1 working day of instruction, reducing billing queries and revisions by about 35%.
- **Legal research:** Researched case law and legislation for 10 to 12 hours a week (about 1,400 hours in three years) across LawPavilion, Legalpedia, CompuLaw and the chambers' physical library and digital repository, delivering authorities for written addresses within 24 to 48 hours of request.
- **Legal drafting:** Prepared writs, statements of claim, pleadings, witness statements, affidavits and written addresses from court forms and the firm's digital precedent bank, cutting drafting time by about 35% while meeting 100% of court filing deadlines.

- **Records management:** Maintained client data in the chambers' hybrid records system, cross-indexing physical and digital files so any file was found in under 5 minutes (down from about 15) with privileged information kept secure.
- **Virtual hearings and meetings:** Ran Zoom sessions for virtual court hearings, client meetings and briefings, and handled correspondence through Gmail, keeping out-of-town clients involved without travel and answering routine client emails within 24 hours.
- **Litigation:** Acted as counsel of record on a reported defamation suit before the High Court of Rivers State, leading the drafting of filings against senior-level opposition.
- **Case strategy:** Compared opposing parties' pleadings to isolate new facts and issues, shortening evidence preparation by about 25%.
- **Due diligence and compliance:** Completed title and succession checks on property acquisitions, structured payment terms to cut transaction risk, and organised data-protection compliance registers into client-ready reports.

Virtual Legal Assistant (Training Placement, Simulated) | VLA by Vivian Academy | Remote
October – November 2026

- **Client coordination:** Drafted client emails and letters to the academy's professional-communication standards for a fictional London firm (Whitcombe Ashby Family Law LLP).
- **Case management:** Built the practice's data in a Clio trial account (contacts, matters, calendar events, time entries and documents) and completed PracticePanther assignments, earning Clio Certified Administrator status in November 2026.
- **Diary management:** Practised intake, diary control and document preparation on realistic family-law scenarios, working UK hours from Port Harcourt.

NYSC Associate | Rose Adima & Associates | Rivers State, Nigeria

2022 – 2023

- **Litigation support:** Supported litigation across the service year, drafting court documents and tracking hearing dates.
- **Research and correspondence:** Researched law for the team and handled client correspondence.

EDUCATION

LLM, INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL LAW | University of Salford, UK — In progress

LL.B | Rivers State University, Nigeria — 2021

CERTIFICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

CLIO CERTIFIED ADMINISTRATOR, Clio — November 2026

VIRTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANT PROGRAMME (MODULES 1-11), VLA by Vivian Academy — Oct – Nov 2026

CALLED TO THE NIGERIAN BAR, Nigerian Law School, Lagos Campus — 2022

MEMBER, NBA Port Harcourt Branch; YLF Editorial Committee — Current