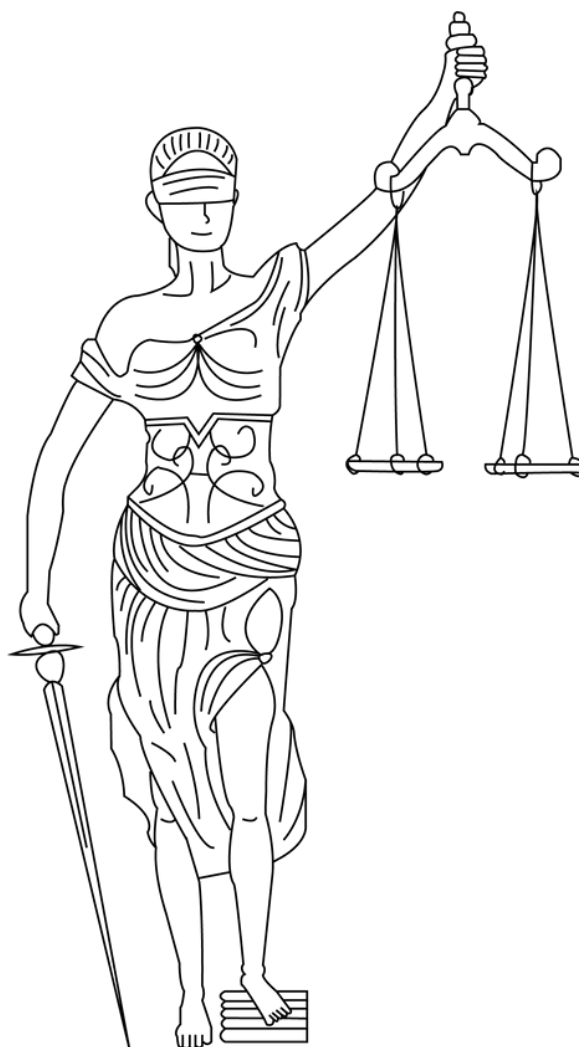


Melbourne University Law Students' Society

CAREERS GUIDE 2022



Melbourne University
Law Students' Society

The Melbourne University Law Students' Society acknowledges that the Law School sits on stolen Wurundjeri land of the Kulin Nation, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded.

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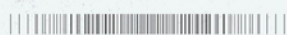
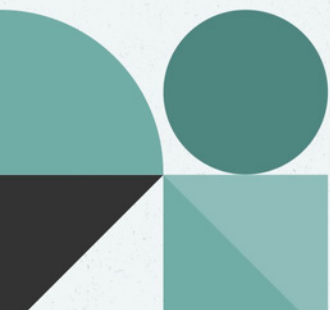


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Dean's Welcome

Professor Matthew Harding

I am delighted to provide a foreword to the MULSS Careers Guide, which for over ten years has been a valuable resource for Melbourne Law School students as they consider their career choices. Sincere thanks to those who produce this excellent publication.

The articles contained within provide a sample of the breadth of careers law school graduates can consider. They are also an important reminder that the clerkship process is just one option for a career in law. Law graduates go on to work in a range of roles, including in advocacy, academia, government, public interest, media, consultancy, and private practice, either as lawyers or in corporate roles. They work locally, nationally and internationally, and many take on traineeships or undertake a PLT program. There is more than one career path, and each of you will make choices that determine the shape of your own career.

This guide is a great place to start your decision making about your future career. Pay attention to which articles stimulate your interest. Do further research on those areas of law, and speak with your classmates, lecturers and MLS Graduate Services and Careers to explore your interests further. For those of you who already have a clear career path in mind, this guide is a timely reminder that career goals should be revisited on a regular basis to ensure they are keeping pace with your ever-expanding knowledge, skills and networks, as well as the evolving employment landscape.

Successful careers are often a combination of preparation, courage and luck. At MLS you have many opportunities to explore and prepare for your career through activities and workshops run by Graduate Services and Careers and the MULSS. I encourage you to engage in these activities early and, when the time is right, seek out job opportunities in which you are genuinely interested.

In some ways, 2022 continues to be a challenging year for students, and many of you will be anxious about how the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 might affect your graduate careers. However, this is also an exciting time in your lives. Your job search may take several months or longer, but with commitment and support from us, you can be confident you will find a job that will be the springboard to a satisfying and stimulating working life.

After many years in legal education, I have seen first-hand how MLS graduates go on to have rewarding careers in diverse sectors around the world. The employment rates of MLS students continue to be exceptionally strong – our most recent Employment Outcomes Survey shows that over 97 per cent of those surveyed from the JD class of 2019 are engaged in full-time employment. Of those employed, 83 per cent are working as legal graduates (trainees with law firms, solicitors, or judges' associates), while the remainder are working in other legal or generalist graduate roles. We are also seeing robust employment figures in Australia in recent months. I am confident that as the world slowly emerges from pandemic-related restrictions and challenges, exciting career opportunities will continue to emerge for new graduates.

Good luck to you all in navigating your future careers. I hope you find the information and advice in this guide helpful, and I look forward to hearing your stories as you continue to achieve great things and take the first steps on the path to what I hope will be a rich and fulfilling career.

Professor Matthew Harding
Dean, Melbourne Law School

Directors' Welcome

Kosta Patsiotis and Chelsea Doyle

Welcome to the Melbourne University Law Students' Society Careers Guide for 2022!

This Guide is intended to be a resource for you to explore the diverse career opportunities available to MLS graduates. This guide is divided into several sections. Within each section you will find the stories, insight and career tips of former law students who went on to work across the legal profession and beyond. The Melbourne JD program opens the door to countless opportunities, in a variety of sectors. We highly encourage you to use this guide as a starting point for your own career journey.

Commercial law is not the only option for an MLS graduate. Law graduates are valued in many areas including public interest law, criminal law, as well as in banking, consulting and professional services, just to name a few. There is no right or wrong career path. What is important is that you are able to find a career path that is fulfilling and rewarding to you. For those who are unsure about where this degree can take you, we recommend two things:

1. Learn from others

Each year, hundreds of Melbourne JD students graduate and head off into the real world. While many begin their careers in commercial firms or in government roles, the opportunities and diversity of experience only grows as time moves on. Whether it be through the Melbourne Law School Mentoring Program, a personal connection or even a LinkedIn message, you never know what you might learn by speaking to those whose careers pathway interests you. The best-case scenario is that you find your calling - the worst is that you gain useful skills and connections along the way!

2. Be open to opportunities

On very rare occasions do you find someone who ended up where they planned all along. Be open minded when it comes to careers opportunities. Whilst it is fantastic to have an idea of where you want to be, do not let this distract you from opportunities. Be willing to listen to people from diverse career paths – you never know where you'll find your passion.

We hope you find this Guide both interesting and useful and we wish you all the best with your future careers.

Acknowledgements

Kosta Patsiotis and Chelsea Doyle

We first wish to thank all the authors who have taken the time to share their knowledge and contribute to the 2022 edition of the Melbourne University Law Students' Society Careers Guide. We would like to thank our sponsors who have made the publication of this Guide possible:

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Our heartfelt thanks to our incredibly hardworking Careers team, Suwen Feng, Charlotte Verley, Estelle Sutherland, Amity Clayfield, Wilson Hsu, Benjamin Hon, Megan O'Leary, Karun Dhaliwal, Riordan Davies and Vivian Tan. We cannot thank you enough for the time and effort you have put into the Careers Portfolio's various events and initiatives. We have been lucky to work with you this year.

We also wish to extend our thanks to the MULSS Communications Directors, Jonathan Li and Laney Facchinetti, who have been invaluable in liaising with us and the marketing and publications co-opts. Further, we would like to thank Michelle Huang, Molly Blue, Tom Scott and Emily Tsang for making this publication come to fruition. We are so grateful to have worked with such a committed and hard working group of people.

One final thank you to MULSS Sponsorship Director, Neeharika Palachanda, for all of her work in organising sponsorship, supporting the Careers and Development Portfolio and her guidance throughout the year.



Academia

Introduction: Academia

Suwen Feng

In general, academia is concerned with the pursuit of research, knowledge, and scholarship. For many law students, a career path in academia is one that often doesn't come to mind. The traditional view of the law as more of a vocational profession, as opposed to a scientific discipline, is a common perception that pushes students towards becoming a legal practitioner. However, if you are an individual who likes to question the status quo, discover new things, critique the law, and share your knowledge with others, working in academia may be a perfect choice for you.

Life as an academic involves dividing one's time between teaching, research, and community involvement. In the context of teaching, academics are not only tasked with delivering lessons, but also preparing classes, marking exams, and providing students with academic support and guidance. Academics may share their research in several ways – through publishing articles in academic journals, writing for other forms of print or digital media, presenting at conferences, engaging in wider public discussions, or contributing to textbooks. It is through these avenues that academics play a crucial role in shaping the legal profession, stimulating discourse in legal education, and even influencing law reform and the formulation of government policy.

Working as an academic is a rewarding profession that comes with many benefits. Work-life flexibility, the freedom to pursue one's passions and the opportunity to mentor and support the next generation of emerging lawyers, make a profession in academia a highly enjoyable and exciting area to work in.

In 2022, the Careers Guide is pleased to be able to share the diverse and insightful experiences of Melbourne Law School Professor Kristen Rundle and PhD candidate Ashleigh Best. We hope you find their experiences inspiring and their research thought-provoking. If reading about their work leaves you with many unanswered questions, this may be an area of interest to you!

Academia: Thoughts from an Initial Sceptic

Professor Kristen Rundle

I've personally never read a career advice manual, but an 'academia' entry in such a text would do well to kick off with questions like this:

Are you insatiably curious about ideas and the causes of things? Are you committed to communicating clearly and with sophistication, and yet accessibly? Do you embrace learning as an incremental experience that ultimately never ends? Do you like spending a lot of time in your own thoughts, figuring them out and feeling them grow? Are you attracted to roles in which you wear a lot of different hats? Are you a 'completer' who seeks whenever possible to see their projects through?

True story: I personally was tricked into this career. The trickster was my masters thesis supervisor at McGill University, the late Roderick Macdonald. He once pretended that for allegedly sound pedagogical reasons he needed to position himself among the students for a particular discussion, so could I please convene the class on his behalf. Which I did. And enjoyed. When he came up to me at the end and said 'see – being a law professor aint a bad job, is it', I probably rolled my eyes. A few months later, refereeing me for a legislative policy advisor job back in Australia, he said 'great job, you'll learn a lot from it – but I'll give you five months'. Again he was painfully right. Five months later (why *five?!?*), I went part-time to accommodate my first casual teaching gig. I wanted to find out how I went at explaining complex things. I wanted to figure out my own questions. I needed to be creative, and to speak in my own voice. Verdict: academia.

The idea of an academic career can seem a long way off to someone still completing their JD. After all, it is customary (if not compulsory) for would-be academics to complete a doctoral degree, and this takes time and much besides. In my case – the sceptic – I did a deal with myself on enrolling in my doctoral degree. I'd try this academic thing for ten years, and then reassess. Along the way I gained experience wearing the many different hats that academia requires you to wear: teaching, researching, writing, inventing, collaborating, hosting, mentoring, commentating, helping to run a university, and more. At the ten-year mark, I didn't need to reassess. I was in.

Like anything worthwhile, being an academic is challenging. Sometimes the workload is overwhelming, precisely because so much of it asks for your best mental energies. You need to be patient with what you are able to achieve, and you quickly learn that everything takes longer than you thought it would. Academia also asks a lot of different things of you. You need to be a communicator and a performer at the same time as you need to embrace solitude and quiet reflection. You need to be organised, and you most definitely need to be generous. But if you cannot help but want to understand the way things are (or could be) more deeply, if you have the commitment to go with what unfolds within the (endless) learning experience, and if the very thought of watching peoples' eyes brighten as they come to understand something in a new light thrills you, then it might well turn out that academia is for you.

Academia: My Journey

Ashleigh Best

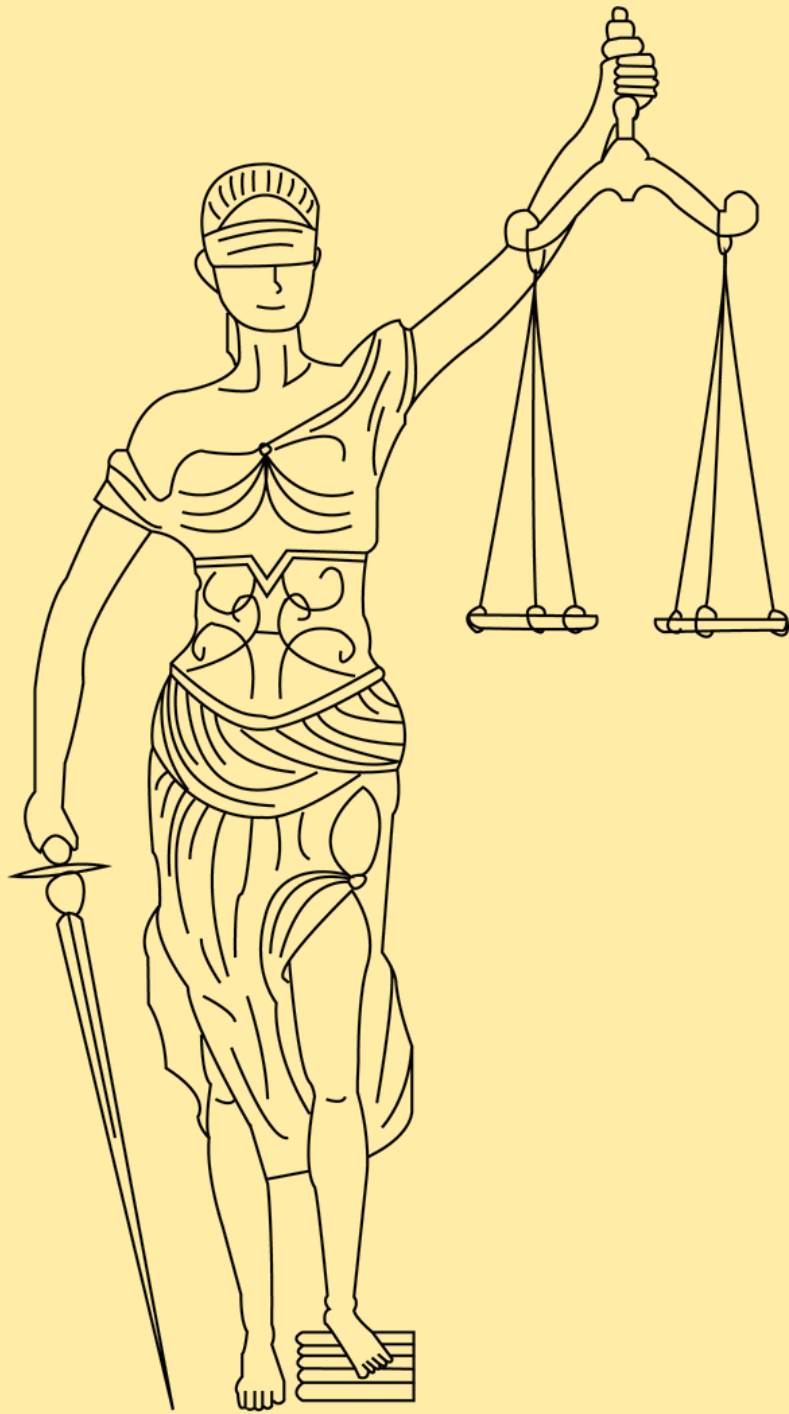
I decided to undertake a PhD at MLS because, while I enjoyed some aspects of practice, I wanted to extend and deepen my knowledge of law as a scholarly discipline, as distinct from a profession. Equally motivating me was the fact that there was a research question which I found truly enthralling: I wanted to interrogate why the laws of jurisdictions across the world continued to overlook the undeniable needs of animals during disasters. Since this topic was noticeably underexamined in the literature, I believed that my project would make a much-needed contribution. I also hoped that it might raise awareness about the devastating plight of animals in disasters, and perhaps even inform the development of legal solutions to address it.

With a clear purpose in mind, I investigated law schools with relevant expertise, and approached Professors Christine Parker and Lee Godden (who are now my brilliant Supervisors) about whether they might supervise my project. After they expressed interest, I prepared a research proposal; this contained my question, the main issues to investigate, why the research was significant, and my proposed methodology. Within a couple of months, I was invited for an interview, and was thrilled to receive my acceptance shortly afterwards.

As the PhD is more like a research apprenticeship than a coursework degree, my day-to-day tasks have changed over my candidature. Initially, my research was exploratory: I undertook a broad survey of relevant fields, attended research support seminars, and met with my supervisors fortnightly to report on my progress. After passing my first major milestone – “Confirmation” – about twelve months into the degree, my research approach narrowed considerably, and I chiefly focused on using the materials I had located in order to develop my own original contention. Now that I’m in the final, “writing up” stage of my PhD, I have largely settled my thesis contention, arguments, theoretical framework and methodology, and am composing the manuscript which will be submitted for examination. When I’m not on campus, I work online with PhD colleagues at a similar stage of candidature – thesis writing is an autonomous pursuit, but it need not be isolating!

I have benefitted from a range of research and teaching-related opportunities as a PhD candidate. In addition to publishing articles, I have had the immense fortune of presenting at conferences in Australia and overseas. I travelled to Perth in early 2020 for an environmental law colloquium, and later in 2022, I will attend the Canadian Animal Law Conference in Toronto; both opportunities were made possible by the generosity of MLS research support funds. I also held a PhD Teaching Fellowship, which gave me valuable experience in teaching into the MLS Breadth program, and both of my supervisors have kindly invited me to deliver guest lectures in their JD and MLM subjects.

Aside from being a rigorous intellectual exercise, the PhD has put numerous career paths within reach. Graduates of the MLS PhD can become tenured academics in universities, enter the public service or not-for-profit sector in policy or specialist roles, become private consultants, or return to legal practice with a wealth of new knowledge and skills, amongst other possible trajectories. As I aspire to have “the best of both worlds”, I plan to combine an academic and a practice-based career: one which marries law as a scholarly discipline with law as a profession. And with a PhD from MLS, I am hopeful that this will be possible!



Bar & Advocacy

Introduction: Bar and Advocacy

Riordan Davies

In the Australian legal system, litigation is the most dominant method of dispute resolution. The iconography of litigation permeates popular culture, literature, architecture, and cinema in ways all other forms of dispute resolution fail to. Despite their cultural resonance, many people see the pathway to becoming a barrister as largely impenetrable, and subsequently, there is a lot of vagueness and mystification around what exactly a barrister does. How do they differ from solicitors and other legal professionals? How can one become a barrister?

The section of this Guide endeavours to resolve all these questions and more by hearing stories from barristers who came from a wide variety of legal backgrounds, sharing insights as they progressed through the pathway to becoming a barrister, including the Bar exam and bar 'Reader's Course'.

Students are made aware of the immense privileges and rewards experienced by barristers. Those interviewed all share a mutual thrill for the appearance and advocacy of their clients, and the feeling of making a tangible difference to their lives. They also revere in their respect for, and knowledge of the law which has developed over their careers.

But their candour also sheds light into the hardships and risks many fledgling barristers face when starting at the Bar. This includes the sharp shift in workflow, transitioning from the steadier flow as a solicitor to the independent and self-regulated nature of work as a barrister. Such a change brings about feelings of isolation, and slow workflows faced by 'baby barristers' which can create volatile incomes.

Exposure to the Court system is certainly not limited to the role of a barrister. For those interested in the inner workings of the court process and the minds of seasoned advocates and judges, a judge's associateship is another path explored in this chapter of the program. In fact, many prospective barristers undertake an associateship to gain an understanding of the courts before entering it as an advocate.

For those curious about life at the bar, we hope these insights inspire and encourage you to consider a life of advocacy and inspire you to shape the perception of the legal system held within wider Australian culture.

Cutting Through the Jargon: FAQs on Life as a Barrister

Timothy Gorton - Victorian Bar

My thanks to the careers team for their invitation to contribute. Life at the Bar is equally challenging and rewarding; it is a real privilege to represent a client in court. It is however a somewhat opaque world, so I hope to below have addressed some of the “FAQs” about this particular career path.

First, the distinction between barrister and solicitor. Although we now live and work in a “fused” legal profession (in the old terminology, we are all admitted as “barristers and solicitors” of the Supreme Court), Australia has maintained a practical division of the two roles. A barrister is a sole practitioner who focuses narrowly and specially upon oral and written advocacy before courts and tribunals.

Second, becoming a barrister. You’ll need a law degree and to have been admitted to practise. In Victoria, you’ll need to sit and pass the Victorian Bar Entrance Exam, which focuses upon civil and criminal procedure, the law of evidence, and professional ethics. Pass that and you will be invited to join the Readers’ Course, wherein you’ll learn written and oral advocacy from senior practitioners and members of the judiciary, and also learn the practical necessities of working as a sole practitioner. Complete that, and you will sign the Bar Roll and take your first steps as a member of counsel.

You’ll also need a mentor and a clerk. A mentor is another barrister from whose chambers you will work for the first six months. They need to have at least 10 years’ experience and not to have been appointed Senior or Queen’s Counsel. It is recommended to have reached out to potential mentors in advance of sitting the Bar Exam.

Your clerk is your talent agent, back-end business manager and confessor all rolled into one. They will handle calls from solicitors who are looking for an available barrister and recommend you for work. They will transform your scribbled notes into feeflips and follow up your unpaid invoices. They will laugh at your terrible jokes and war stories. Once you have been invited to join the Readers’ Course, you apply to various clerk lists broadly based upon the areas of law you intend to practise, in a process similar to clerkships.

Third, what to do between law school and sitting that Bar Exam. My own career path is an example, but no more than that (and a particularly dull one). In law school I had the opportunity to study the Advocacy elective, which gave me my first glimpse at the work of a barrister. After graduation, I worked in a commercial law firm, and realised pretty quickly that I enjoyed working in litigation, and in particular those aspects relating most closely to court. After a few years, I had the opportunity to work as a judge's associate at the Federal Court of Australia. This gave the opportunity to see trials and appeals up close, to work with a member of the judiciary and understand the judicial process, and to decide if this was a life that was attractive to me.

Now, mine is not the only path. There is no one "way" to the Bar, although there are perhaps common threads: (i) some professional experience in legal practise; (ii) an exposure to the workings of the courts (whether as an associate, and instructing solicitor, or a solicitor advocate); and (iii) opportunities to have met other barristers and in particular potential mentors.

Fourth, the work of a barrister day to day. Unsurprisingly, it can be exceptionally varied, and carefully laid plans are liable to be thrown into the air without notice by some development. But generally, a day may involve one or more of the following:

- Drawing court documents, including pleadings, affidavits or submissions;
- Conferring with your instructing solicitor about the progress of a case, or with your client or another witness to better understand the evidence that will be given at trial;
- Speaking with friends and colleagues because you have a "stupid" (there is no such thing) question about an issue of procedure or of law; and
- Actually appearing in Court, whether in applications, trials or appeals.

Finally, let me acknowledge that the above can only scratch the surface of a career at the Bar. No doubt, for every question I might have answered 20 have gone through to the keeper. Happily, I know that almost every member of the Bar is happy to answer questions from students who might approach them. I encourage you to do so

A few months after I signed the Bar Roll I walked into my mentor's chambers and said to them "We have the best job in the world, don't we?". I hope that, for those of you who make your way to the Bar, you will enjoy it as much as I have.



Commercial Law

Introduction: Commercial Law

A career in commercial law is diverse, challenging and incredibly rewarding. Those undertaking the profession are privy to some of the country's largest matters, and garner an understanding that extends beyond law itself, with commercial lawyers needing a deep knowledge of local and global markets, and ESG considerations.

The commercial impact of the global pandemic has shifted how private practice firms operate and engage with clients. It has shown firms the benefits of flexible work practices that put their staff first, while simultaneously maintaining the delivery of quality legal advice. These changes provide graduates with the opportunity to expose themselves to a wide range of choices when determining the firm that is the best 'fit'. Private practice offers individuals the diversity of work in firms of various sizes and specialties, including a strong focus on pro bono, the development of client-facing skills and international opportunities.

This section includes articles from numerous commercial law firms, which run through various takes on working in the area. Those who have published articles in this section delve into current issues, misconceptions and the difference between commercial law in theory and in practice.

Day in the Life of a Commercial Lawyer

Michelle Ainsworth - Lawyer, Corporate and M&A
Arnold Bloch Leibler

A day in the life of a commercial lawyer is a tricky one to describe because it feels like no two days are the same. While there may be many similar elements in an average week, each day can be a little unpredictable and guaranteed to involve new challenges.

In the commercial team at Arnold Bloch Leibler we advise a diverse range of clients, including some of Australia's most powerful businesses and their executives, as well as some of our newest and most exciting start-up companies.

This means in any day I could be preparing transaction documents for a private business sale, advising one of our publicly listed clients on a capital markets deal, or providing strategic governance advice to a mid-size business.

Some of the things I can expect to do during an average day include:

Client meetings and calls

Our approach to advising clients is to work closely with them to not only understand their business and what they are trying to achieve, but to also ensure they know we are working alongside them as a trusted partner in their endeavours. This means I am regularly attending meetings with clients with other lawyers and partners in our team. As I have progressed through the first few years of my career, I attend some of these meetings on my own, with guidance from the relevant partner, which has opened up a new challenge as a junior lawyer.

Drafting transaction documents

Drafting is a big portion of my day, however this can take many forms. In any day I may be drafting a commercial transaction document, such as an asset sale agreement for a client looking to sell their business, short and concise legal advice in emails, or longer form research memos. As someone who enjoys the challenge of working with the written word, this is an enjoyable and significant part of my work.

The unexpected call

Although the average day will usually involve a mixture of drafting and reviewing documents, attending meetings and responding to client queries, what may also happen is the unexpected curveball issue. I am often called in to an unusual matter with colleagues from within the commercial team or from across the firm, such as assisting with commercial queries in disputes, responding to an urgent client query, or working with a team to devise a solution to a curly problem. This may mean my best laid plans are upended as we urgently help a client meet an impending deadline, respond to an unexpected issue, or devise a strategic plan to address a matter that has arisen. These calls make the days exciting and interesting, and although they often leave my carefully prepared to-do list in shreds, they make my work in the ABL commercial team particularly rewarding.

Team meetings and trainings

Our team works as one between our Sydney and Melbourne offices, so we enjoy regular team meetings with both states zooming in to catch up on interesting matters that colleagues may be working on. An average day is likely to include a short check-in team meeting or one of our lunchtime training meetings. For training we gather in one of our board meetings over lunch and team members present to each other on recent matters, or particularly interesting legal topics, to ensure we are keeping up with changes in the law. These sessions often involve lively debates between team members which are always enjoyable.

Hallway banter and coffees

Chatting with colleagues in the hallway, or at our in-house café is a great way to check in with friends from within my team and across the firm. Our team is one that loves a bit of banter and there will always be chatter between colleagues, whether it be seeking help from others to answer a tricky question, discussing weekend plans or swapping book recommendations for those avid readers in the group.



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Pro Bono at Arnold Bloch Leibler

Caitlin Edwards - Senior Associate

Arnold Bloch Leibler

Choosing where to apply for a clerkship and begin your career as a law graduate is challenging, to say the least.

It is sensible to seek advice from career advisers, professors and peers. Employer presentations are useful; online forums, less so. Insights can also be gained from consulting great publications like this one. But in my experience well intentioned advice is often conflicting and due diligence has its limitations.

I made my judgment call by identifying what mattered to me most as a graduate — great mentors, a focus on training and retaining junior lawyers and a culture that aligned with my values. I have been lucky to find these things at Arnold Bloch Leibler.

ABL law graduates are trained in-house by partners and senior associates rather than undertaking a PLT course. I have benefited from this approach as it immediately plugged me in to the firm's network, resources and culture. Instead of hypotheticals, our training drew on recent matters and partners' experiences.

I joined ABL's Native Title and Public Interest Law practice as a graduate and have two excellent mentors in Peter Seidel and Bridgid Cowling. From day one Peter and Bridgid have encouraged me to develop my judgment, initiative and voice. As a graduate, I developed these skills by speaking in client meetings, preparing first drafts of legal advices and agreements and presenting my views on matters of strategy, policy and law reform. I've also been supported to pursue Masters level study in my area of expertise.

ABL doesn't offer rotations. I understand that this can be daunting to a law student with no clear sense of what sort of lawyer they want to be "when they grow up". But a lack of variety has certainly not been my experience. I have worked with a number of our teams at ABL and had exposure to many areas of law including native title, cultural heritage, defamation, intellectual property, consumer law, administrative law, disability discrimination, trusts, civil aviation and taxation. As a graduate I regularly relied on the support of grads in other teams when the variety became overwhelming!

As a lawyer I now support a diverse range of clients including charities, social benefit companies, Aboriginal Land Councils and Indigenous corporations. My core practice is focused on commercial and governance advice for charities that are active in the cultural, health, environmental and arts sectors. I also regularly advise clients on matters relating to tax concessions, corporate structuring and funding regulation. In many ways, this work is similar to the work of any other commercial lawyer. After all, charities and for-purpose organisations are usually incorporated entities generating the same broad needs for legal advice. But there are also unique challenges, including funding insecurity, changing political ideas about what is in the public benefit, and complex relationships with the law and legal institutions as targets of disempowerment and advocates for change.

Fortunately, we draw no distinction between our fee paying and pro bono work. Embedded in ABL's approach to public interest law is a deep commitment to legal professionalism and an honest acknowledgment that the firm's contribution to the public good is matched by the corresponding growth of its lawyers and reputation.

Four years in, my role at ABL remains challenging and rewarding. Particular highlights have included working alongside a major Australian charity as the Company Secretary, assisting my clients to respond to concerted efforts to undermine charitable advocacy, preparing a Literature Review on a significant piece of land rights legislation, a trip to Cairns to negotiate a long running dispute on Torres Strait Islander land, concluding an Australian first deal to secure \$30 million in funding for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and start-ups, and leading a clerk day out to the National Gallery of Victoria for a private viewing of original Namatjira artworks following ABL's role in the historic return of copyright to the Namatjira family.

Trusting my gut has worked out well for me so far. I hope you have the opportunity and confidence to do the same.

Arnold Bloch Leibler

Lawyers and Advisers

"I started at Arnold Bloch Leibler as a seasonal clerk and was offered a position as a law graduate. I enjoyed working on a range of exciting matters, with a significant level of responsibility - helping to support the early stages of my career. The level of mentoring and unparalleled training offered by the firm made my decision to return to Arnold Bloch Leibler much easier."

Daniel Lopez, 2021 Law Graduate

To find out more about our Graduate program, visit: abl.com.au/careers



Grow your career at Gadens

Our Grads@Gadens program offers you two rotations, excellent opportunities and practical on-the-job training to ensure you excel in a commercially-driven environment.

For more information visit: www.gadens.com/grads@gadens



Grads@Gadens

Grads@Gadens is the program through which we attract and retain talent within the firm. Once on our program, you will immediately receive challenging and varied work with a high level of responsibility.

Grads@Gadens is based on two, six-month rotations through different practice areas. Practice areas in the rotations include:

- Real Estate and Construction;
- Disputes and Investigations;
- Corporate (including Tax Advisory);
- Workplace Advisory and Disputes;
- Intellectual Property and Technology; and
- Banking and Finance.

Spending time in different practice areas means you have the opportunity to make an informed decision about your chosen specialisation. Together with our practical on-the-job training and working directly with partners you will develop a broad set of skills which you can carry with you throughout your career.

Training and development

Throughout the program we will invest in you and provide comprehensive support to ensure each rotation is a success. You will team-up with a dedicated supervisor who will work closely with you to develop your technical skills, allocate work and provide ongoing feedback.

You will attend multiple workshops each month led by partners and senior members of staff so that you are continually learning and developing. These sessions focus on business skills and technical development, and ensure that you are given the support you need to excel in a commercially driven environment.

Life at Gadens

At Gadens we offer genuine flexibility with Your work. Your way, helping you achieve balance both personally and professionally and a 'dress for your day' approach. We provide a collaborative, open and welcoming environment with regular social events and functions, and health and wellbeing initiatives.

Commitment to inclusion and diversity

Our people are at the centre of everything we do. Our Board, Partners and Management Team are committed to providing an environment that encourages and promotes inclusion and diversity, instilling pride in our firm and our values. We will all maintain and build upon an environment where our people are comfortable and confident to bring their authentic selves to work and celebrate their differences.

Inclusion and diversity is an integral part of our vision and strategy. We strive to represent the diversity of our people, clients, and communities in which we live and work. We are committed to ensuring an inclusive culture in which everyone can realise their full potential.

About Gadens

Gadens is a leading Australian law firm with 97 partners and 880 staff across offices located in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney.

We regularly undertake highly complex and day-to-day transactional legal work for a wide range of clients across multiple industry sectors. Our clients include major Australian and multinational organisations – we are advisors to a number of the Top 200 companies listed on the ASX – as well as many small to medium-sized businesses, and high-net-worth families and individuals.

Our aim is to help our clients achieve their objectives – providing an outstanding client experience for every client, every time. This is underpinned by our intense focus on understanding our clients, their needs and expectations and building meaningful, long-term relationships – a number of which span decades.

For more information visit: www.gadens.com/grads@gadens.

5 Commercial Law Misconceptions

Gadens

You've probably sat through your fair share of law school events where a group of people in suits (who don't look much older than you) tell you everything that's great about working at their commercial law firm. But what do you actually know about 'commercial law', other than the fact it's traditionally practiced by people in those tall, shiny CBD towers? Chances are you've heard all manner of explanations, with varying degrees of accuracy and credibility. With that in mind, let's consider five commonly held misconceptions about commercial law...

1. Commercial law is corporations law

You may be thinking, "I studied corporations law at university, is commercial law just directors' fiduciary duties and piercing the corporate veil?" Not quite. Commercial lawyers advise clients in the context of trade and commerce; in other words, businesses and the people who interact with them.

Generally speaking, most commercial law firms will have teams that practice in M&A and corporate advisory, tax, banking and finance, intellectual property and information technology, real estate and construction, employment and of course commercial litigation. Depending on your particular interests, commercial law offers a plethora of options when it comes to building your practice.

2. Commercial law life (for junior lawyers) is proofreading

You might be worried that you'll spend your first few years as a junior lawyer fixing typos, formatting documents and proofreading while more senior lawyers do all the actual drafting, negotiation and client engagement.

Let's be honest. Proofreading gives you an opportunity to familiarise yourself with concepts, drafting techniques and documents which you haven't come across before in a low risk context. And while the idea of running redlines might not get you out of bed in the morning, the reality is that details matter; remember that every great lawyer's practice is built on a solid foundation of fundamental skills.

That's not to say that your first few years as a burgeoning commercial lawyer will be spent feeling like a glorified spell-check machine. Any team worth its salt knows the value of investing in its juniors and providing them with opportunities to do meaningful work which builds both their skill set and confidence. This is a particular strength of firms who operate in the mid-market, where juniors are given opportunities to deal directly with clients and are entrusted with ownership of matters early on in their careers – with plenty of support, of course!

3. Commercial lawyers only act for the top end of town

How many businesses do you think there are in Australia? In the world? It's easy to think that the only companies who need legal advice are those whose transactions or IPOs land on the front page of the AFR. Similarly, you may think that all law firms are competing for the business of a handful of companies that sit in your super fund.

But consider this: according to the ABS, in July 2021 there were over 2.4 million actively trading businesses in Australia. Businesses come in all shapes and sizes; sooner or later most, if not all, will turn to someone for professional advice. Maybe they're a family-owned business looking to sell after 30 years and retire, or a start-up trying to secure financing for their big idea that's going to change the world. They're going to need a lawyer they can depend on to provide quality, commercial advice that doesn't break the bank.

4. Commercial law is full of Type A personalities

We all know the type: the slick suit and perfectly coiffed hair, a poster of Harvey Specter on the wall, a truckload of confidence (some might say over-confidence) and a negotiating philosophy that begins and ends at 'if you're not first, you're last'. Just a typical commercial lawyer, right?

Hardly. The commercial lawyer straight out of central casting would quickly find themselves out of clients or law firms willing to take their calls. The truth is that commercial law, and transactional law in particular, is about collaboration and compromise. Any negotiation strategy founded on aggression and a 'winner takes all' approach will quickly lead to deals falling over and frustrated clients.

Firms are increasingly recognising that a working environment which fosters a culture of collaboration and support results in happier lawyers, stronger teams and better outcomes for clients. After all, lawyers are in the business of relationships, and the strongest relationships are built on a foundation of respect, trust and support, not cutthroat competition.

5. Commercial lawyers don't actually practice law

The classic lawyer archetype is well-defined: the advocate standing in court, eloquently making their client's case to the judge and jury. Law schools similarly approach the teaching of law through a litigious lens – *Donoghue v Stevenson* would be far less compelling if we began by considering how Stevenson negotiated his key distribution agreement. In this context, you'd be forgiven for thinking that a transactional lawyer, who spends their days drafting and negotiating contracts and may never step foot in a courtroom after their admission, doesn't really practice law at all.

But peel away all of the layers and you're left with a simple, fundamental truth: all lawyers are advocates; we seek to persuade others to see the world from our client's point of view. Whether you do this in the courtroom or the boardroom is irrelevant, but the difference you can make to your clients' lives is anything but.



ONE FIRM WORLDWIDE®

Working at Jones Day...

One Firm WorldwideSM

Jones Day is a global law firm with more than 2,500 lawyers in 41 offices across five continents. The Firm is distinguished by: a singular tradition of client service; the mutual commitment to, and the seamless collaboration of, a true partnership; formidable legal talent across multiple disciplines and jurisdictions; and shared professional values that focus on client needs.

The Firm's 125 years of sustained growth in experience, reputation and successful client interaction have been built by its dedication to a 'One Firm Worldwide' philosophy, which fosters the creation of interoffice and cross-practice teams, assembled to ensure that clients receive the best possible guidance and representation, without regard to barriers conventionally imposed by geography, borders, time zones or language.



We provide extensive training through the New Lawyers program. Each November, we bring together new associates from across the Firm at the "New Lawyers Academy" in Washington for three days of hands-on training and meetings with Firm leaders. In addition to helping them understand Jones Day's culture, organization and operation, the Academy gives our new lawyers the opportunity to meet their peers in the Firm's other offices.

Graduate, Summer Clerkship Programs and Paralegal Positions

We run summer clerkship programs in our Sydney and Melbourne offices that offer selected positions to talented students who are at their penultimate year at university. We give our summer clerks real work for real clients, to provide them an opportunity to learn what the practice of law at a large firm is all about and we aim for summer clerks to become future graduates of the Firm. In Perth and Brisbane we recruit paralegals on a rolling basis with the view that paralegals have the opportunity to do meaningful work and become future graduates at the Firm.

FIRM OVERVIEW			
LAWYERS WORLDWIDE	AUSTRALIAN OFFICES	OFFICES	COUNTRIES
2500	4	41	17

Australia

Jones Day's presence in Australia has grown significantly. The Firm has added new offices in Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane over the last six years in addition to our office in Sydney, reflecting our commitment to expanding our service to the Australian market.

Our lawyers work in a dynamic and stimulating multidisciplinary environment by collaborating with colleagues from different practices and different offices worldwide.

We continue to attract many of the legal industry's most highly regarded and sought-after lawyers while maintaining our focus on promoting internal talent through the ranks.

The New Lawyers Group

Jones Day recognizes that many law students leave law school not knowing which practice they want to enter. We also believe that a more well-rounded lawyer is a better lawyer and that a wide range of experience is valuable to a new lawyer. Accordingly, many years ago Jones Day created the New Lawyers Group, which allows new associates to gain exposure to different practice areas and lawyering styles at the Firm before making a commitment to a specific-practice.

A Culture of Client Service and Collaboration

Jones Day's commitment to client service means our lawyers work together in a collaborative atmosphere where teamwork is essential, respect for and from colleagues is the norm, and credit is shared for a job well done.

Applications

We run Summer Clerkship Programs in Sydney and Melbourne and follow the NSW Summer Clerkship and LIV Seasonal Clerkship Scheme.

Sydney:

Applications open on 6 June 2022
Applications close at 11.59 pm on 10 July 2022

Melbourne:

Applications open on 4 July 2022
Applications close on 14 August 2022

Applications must be made online. Please visit us at www.jonesdaycareers.com/australia

Commercial Law: What University Doesn't Teach

Jones Day

Ethics and integrity: At university, you will study professional ethics and analyse one-dimensional ethical scenarios. As a practicing lawyer, you will be faced with difficult, multi-dimensional situations involving conflicting interests and which raise difficult ethical questions. These can be hard situations, but you cannot let them compromise your personal or professional integrity. Without them, you will have a short career in the law.

Courage and independence: At university, you will study the importance of maintaining independence as a lawyer. Do not underestimate the courage that can be required to do the right thing as a practising lawyer. You will be representing clients in difficult, stressful and often hostile environments. A great lawyer will be courageous in fiercely and fearlessly defending their clients legal rights wherever required, whilst always demonstrating independence and the ethics and integrity required of you.

Individual accountability: At university, you are individually accountable for your academic success. As a practicing commercial lawyer, you must demonstrate individual accountability for every decision and judgment made on behalf of a client and the firm. Being accountable requires taking ownership and delivering on the commitments you make to others and taking responsibility for the consequences of your actions. Lawyers who have a sense of personal accountability are greatly respected and trusted.

Dedication, determination and commitment: At university, to excel you must demonstrate dedication, determination and commitment to your studies. As a practising lawyer, you must demonstrate dedication to the client, determination to provide quality legal advice in an efficient and cost effective way, and commitment to professional values. Great commercial lawyers can combine extraordinary work ethic with compassion for the client and their interests, and a commitment to professional values.

Client relationships and business acumen: At university, you will have limited knowledge of the clients in the factual scenarios in which you are analysing and their commercial needs. In practice, a commercial client needs pragmatic and commercial advice. To deliver this as a practising lawyer you must possess an understanding of the client – their corporate structure, business model and relationships with key stakeholders – and their approaches to specific matters – their objectives, budgets, pressures and deadlines. This understanding will shape your strategy for the client and enable you to work effectively to meet their expectations, including with respect to reputational issues, cost appetite, commercial objectives and risk tolerance. This understanding will also enable you to predict upcoming obstacles and opportunities for the client and prepare pre-emptively.

Market knowledge: At university, you will typically analyse factual scenarios isolated from wider external factors. As a practising lawyer, it is critically important to maintain a deep understanding of market trends and developments in national and global business, economics and politics, and how these can impact your legal advice and benefit your clients. Always keep a close eye out for issues that may impact the firm you are working for and its clients. Take ownership of an issue that sparks your interest and generate ideas about how you could demonstrate the firm's knowledge and expertise of that issue to existing and potential clients.

Time management and organisation skills: At university, you will be used to studying a number of different subjects and juggling a number of assignments and exams at the one time. As a practising lawyer, you will often be working on a number of different tasks for different more senior lawyers at the one time and with different time pressures. Work smarter rather than harder. Hone your time management and organisational skills and find what works best for you. Calendars, to-do lists and technology will be your friend.

Flexibility and resilience: At university, whilst you are juggling a number of priorities, you are still in control of your own schedule. The practice of commercial law is dynamic and ever changing. It requires you to work under pressure and to manage a variety of different interests. To thrive in this environment, you must be willing to be flexible with your time and be resilient to change and a level of stress when things do not go as planned. Develop foundational habits now that will benefit your mental health, so that you can carry these with you into practice.

10 Things I Wish I Knew About Commercial Law as a Law Student

Johnson Winter & Slattery

Honestly, I didn't set out to become a commercial lawyer (although I do love it). On graduation day I had a million ideas about what I wanted to do and where I was going to go. Because of this, I struggle to recall exactly what it is I would have liked to have known about commercial law when I was still choosing my career path.

However, in my legal career I have practiced in a wide variety of workplaces and in a wide variety of practice areas. I have taken witness statements sitting in the sand in The Central Desert and assisted with international transactions. I have had the benefit of some fantastic mentors, and some (occasionally difficult) professional lessons.

So from that patchwork of experience...here are my "10 Things I wish I knew about commercial law as a student.

1. Culture matters

A large part of your day is spent at work, so finding a workplace and a team that fits with your personality and goals is going to have a huge impact on your job satisfaction. Take the time to consider the culture of the firms you are applying for, and how they will support your career, your mental health and your general wellbeing.

2. The study never ends

The best lawyers are lifelong learners. As we know, the law is constantly changing and if you want to provide the best service for your clients and be the best lawyer you can, you need to stay up to date. This means reading that journal article, listening to that law podcast and making it your business to know what's going on in your practice area.

3. Know your clients

Good lawyers take the time to get to know their clients, their goals, their businesses and the industries they operate in. Your job is to provide your client with the best advice for them, and the best advice is not just legal but also strategic and commercial. You can't achieve this if you don't know your client and you don't know what drives them.

4. Ask for help when you need it

We have all been new at work, we have all received instructions we don't understand, or not known how to track down the file we need. If you really need clarification on a task, ask early. No one is going to thank you for sitting on a task for hours because you were unsure how to start, and asking for help never ended a graduate's career.

5. Sometimes it's about the process

Some of the best contracts are rarely, if ever, read after they are signed. After negotiations most contracts are filed away and never looked at again. If you manage your negotiations well, at the end you will have two parties who are well informed and aware of what to expect, what to do and where they stand if any issues arise.

6. Build a meaningful network

The term 'networking' is thrown about a lot, but it doesn't mean flashing business cards around and asking vague acquaintances for favours. People can spot insincerity a mile away, so building a network is far more effective if you work to build genuine connections and sincere relationships. Try to find ways you can assist others, and find good mentors where you can.

7. Look for the opportunities in everything

...because opportunities are everywhere. Some tasks are going to be less glamorous than others, but don't be closed off about the jobs you are given. Do the work you are assigned, do it the highest standard you can, and then ask for something more. Often this will lead to more complex and interesting work.

8. Think long term

Whether you are preparing an advice for a client or managing a negotiation, keep the long term goals in mind. Sometimes something that seems like a short term easy win for a client, can set them up for failure in respect of their long term goals. Make sure you always have an eye on the bigger picture and the long term strategy.

9. Don't panic

It's okay to not know exactly what area of commercial law you want to practice in. Many of us started out in areas (Native Title) wildly different to those in which we ended up (Competition Law), so don't get disheartened if your first practice area is not what you thought it would be. It is completely possible to pivot to new areas and into new teams, especially if you have a workplace that is structured to facilitate this.

10. Take care of yourself

This really is the most important thing of all. Legal practice can be demanding and, like any job, it can be stressful at times. Take the time to build a good support network and life outside of your work. Maintain good relationships with your friends, family and community and take the time for the things that make you happy. Check in with your mental health early and often, and show yourself kindness if there are days on which you are not your best.

On that final note, good luck with your graduate career choices, good luck with your coming careers and we wish you every success!



Your career. Your choice.



ACCELERATE YOUR CAREER

Our flexible team structure means you will not be held back. Our lawyers take on the work that reflects their ability, not their job title. You'll also benefit from your own structured and bespoke professional development program. There are no barriers to your success with us.



GO YOUR OWN WAY

Our business model is different to other firms. We want our lawyers to focus on the quality of their legal work and client experience. That means you won't be under pressure to meet billing targets. You will compete with your adversaries, not your peers.



IT'S A VIBE THING

What truly sets us apart is our people. We pride ourselves on being down to earth, approachable, but always high performing. Our ethos is: "we're in it together" and it's what we live by.



NO.1 FOR AUSTRALIAN CLIENTS

We were named Best Law & Related Services Firm (\$50-\$200m revenue) in 2021 beatonbenchmarks research – the industry's only awards based on nothing but client feedback. In fact, we ranked #1 for Overall client service against all firms with a revenue over \$50m.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Just submit your CV, covering letter and current official academic transcript via www.jws.com.au/careers. You can address this to Wilma Lewis, our Senior People and Development Consultant.

LET'S CHAT

Wilma Lewis, Senior People and Development Consultant on email Wilma.Lewis@jws.com.au or phone 02 8247 9630.

To learn more about our programs, visit our website: www.jws.com.au/careers

My Time as a Junior Lawyer in Commercial at Maddocks

Sam McKenzie - Lawyer (Tax and Structuring)

Having started my journey at Maddocks as a seasonal clerk in 2019, before undertaking the graduate program in 2021, I have recently settled in the Tax and Structuring sub-group, a specialised team within the broader Maddocks Commercial team.

I decided to settle in the tax and structuring sub-group on the basis of my interest in the complexities and practicalities of the taxation system and how this impacts the day-to-day operations of a business. In particular, as a graduate I enjoyed witnessing how a strong understanding of commercial and taxation law can assist clients in navigating unpleasant tax and legal issues, which ultimately allows the client to focus on conducting their business and achieving their goals.

As part of my role as a junior lawyer in the team, I frequently work with senior lawyers and partners, both within the tax and structuring sub-group and the broader Commercial team, to provide practical strategic advice for our clients. I'm fortunate to have a broad and diverse range of tasks in my role, which always keep me on my toes and developing as a lawyer. Common tasks involve drafting legal advices on a range of complex taxation and general commercial queries, preparing and lodging submissions to both state and federal revenue agencies and preparing legal documents to give effect to our client's structures and commercial ventures.

In addition to the various tasks I perform, I am also fortunate to be in a team, which acts for varying range of clients including accountants, financial advisers, individual taxpayers and Australian and multinational corporations. The broad range of clients, who operate in numerous industries, has been fundamental to my development, in particular in understanding the different challenges and tax issues that our clients are confronted with, as well as the commercial parameters in which they operate.

As a member of the relatively small and specialised tax and structuring sub-group, I am fortunate to have the autonomy to independently liaise with clients and develop my soft skills through direct client communication. This in combination with the support and guidance on offer from senior lawyers and partners, allows me to learn from those above me, whilst also forging my own path as a lawyer.

Whilst a large proportion of my learning as a lawyer occurs on the job, I am also lucky to work at a firm, which encourages and places an emphasis on developing their junior lawyers. Whether through organised trainings or through more sporadic and spontaneous guidance from senior lawyers, I am never left short of help from those around me, who are invested in my learning and committed to sharing their knowledge.

My Time as a Junior Lawyer in Commercial at Maddocks

Michael Wells - Lawyer (Banking, Restructuring and Insolvency)

I'm a junior lawyer in Maddocks' Commercial team, primarily practicing in banking, restructuring and insolvency. I started at Maddocks as a seasonal clerk, before moving into a graduate role where I rotated through Employment, Safety and People, Dispute Resolution and Litigation, and Commercial teams.

A typical week will involve me attending Court, meeting with clients over coffee or lunch, drafting legal documents, considering and drafting advice, and reading new case law that I could then use to draft an article to put on the firm's website.

I decided to specialise in insolvency because I'm fascinated how insolvent businesses impact the economy and people's lives. As a litigious lawyer, the majority of my work involves drafting court documents including affidavits, pleadings, and briefs to counsel. I've always enjoyed doing legal research, so a large part of my work also involves drafting research memos for partners and barristers. It's a very rewarding feeling discovering a legal precedent or developing a legal argument, and seeing that used in court.

I also spend time each week designing and developing software solutions to automate legal processes. Maddocks has provided me with a budget to do so and I feel very fortunate to work with a firm that supports my interests.

Sitting within the broader Commercial team has provided me with rich opportunities to learn fundamental commercial law principles such as corporate structuring, trusts, securities, taxation, and drafting contracts. This holistic training in commercial law has been essential in building my understanding of clients' business contexts and complex commercial documents used as evidence in court proceedings.



Your career begins on Day One

From Day One you will have challenging, meaningful work, gain exposure to clients, be given a good level of responsibility, work in a supportive and collaborative team and have regular access to our partners.



Scan this QR code to find out what it's like to work at Maddocks.



Maddocks

Transitioning from study to practice can be tricky.

Your life as an emerging lawyer will be filled with responsibilities to juggle.

That's why you need your Practical Legal Training to work around you.

With the College, you get to tailor your PLT more than anywhere else. And our PLT will equip you with sought-after skills - with support every step of the way.

THE FLEXIBLE FIT

A program that fits into your competing life commitments.

POWERED BY PRACTICAL SKILLS

Focus on real-world tasks rather than old-school theory.

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

The support to be career ready from day one.

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The preferred provider of 30+ law firms and Australian legal graduates.



“My experience with the College of Law was overwhelmingly positive.”

- Emma, Graduate

Commerciality and ESG

Mikaylie Page - White & Case

How Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance Consideration Comes into Practice

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is a framework for sustainable business practice. It involves applying good governance principles to identifying and reducing the adverse impacts of a business on the environment and on the societies and communities in which it operates, and it does so in a measureable and transparent manner. ESG helps companies and organisations identify and reduce their environmental and social impacts, and create long-term value in the business.

White & Case is a market leader in managing ESG risks and advising clients on complex issues and challenges across the globe. Because ESG touches many aspects of our clients' activities, White & Case has a global and multi-disciplinary ESG team of partners and associates, encompassing specialists in finance, environmental, disputes, business and human rights, energy, climate change and corporate lawyers. Opportunities to get involved in these areas of practice are encouraged, with regular client work and thought leadership opportunities stemming from the Firm's involvement in ESG.

ESG comprises of three main considerations that can each be benchmarked against criteria that can be used to track a company's performance:

- **Environment** considers how a company minimises its environmental impact and cares for the planet by assessing issues related to resource use, greenhouse gas emissions, energy intensity, climate risk mitigation, waste management and physical environmental challenges and opportunities.
- **Social** considers how a company interacts with its employees, the communities that it operates in and labour standards across its supply chain and extended supplier network. It considers issues such as the gender pay gap, employee turnover, health and safety, modern slavery, forced and child labour, and human rights.
- **Corporate Governance** considers how well a company runs its business to incorporate environment and social considerations and includes metrics, such as company policies and auditing procedures, disclosure requirements, reporting, prevention of corruption and Board independence.

With increasing pressure on companies to commit to implementing ESG action, there is a business imperative to both assess and improve performance on key issues such as climate change, modern slavery and ESG reporting. Not doing so carries a number of risks including:

- Limiting access to capital and financing as lenders become more reluctant to lend to companies that are not taking ESG action;
- Compliance with both domestic legislation and international standards that are developing in response to pressure for ESG action;
- Reputational risks and impacts on a company's social licence to operate; and
- Litigation, particularly in relation to climate litigation and human rights.

“Companies are facing rapidly changing norms and expectations of corporate behaviour on how they protect the environment and human rights from their business activities. In many cases, they also face existential challenges to the future of their business due to the effects of climate change, and higher expectations of corporate behaviour and governance by investors, financiers, governments and communities.

The growing importance of climate change, impact investing and human rights will likely lead to ESG and Sustainability becoming a defined category in legal services, as companies navigate a complex and rapidly developing regulatory environment” Tim Power, Partner – Land, Environment and Planning.

Together we make a mark

Graduate careers in law

As a graduate in one of our Australia offices, you will have the opportunity to work on challenging cross-border client matters providing you with the international experience and exposure from day one. Join us and make your mark.

whitecase.com/careers

1

of the only law firms to offer a guaranteed overseas seat

2

Australian offices in Melbourne and Sydney

110

nationalities represented across the Firm

45

offices across 31 countries

Tier 1

by *The Legal 500* for Project Development and Project Finance

87

languages spoken across the Firm



Development Opportunities at White & Case

Angie Ertel and Ruveena Kaliannan- White & Case

Working at White & Case presents a host of development opportunities, through formal training programs and on-the-job training opportunities provided through a collaborative culture, focus on innovation and the global exposure graduates receive from day one.

Angie Ertel, talks to her on-the-ground experiences and development during the Graduate program, and Ruveena Kaliannan, shares insights on her overseas seat – an integral part of the Firm’s graduate offering.

Angie Ertel

White & Case provide several training sessions a week on topics ranging from payments law in Victoria, trends in construction contract models in the Asia-Pacific region to the legal implications of the development of block chain technology globally. As a graduate, you are taught a range of practice technology tools through a specific training series to encourage you to think of ways these tools can improve efficiency. This year, I’ve been working with a team of lawyers in Australia and the Technology team in London to develop an automation tool that’s now being used nationally. The ease of working across offices, culture of collaboration and encouragement to take on your own projects means that juniors at the Firm can explore their interests early on.

White & Case’s size in Australia gives graduates the opportunity to have a bigger impact with their work early in their legal career. Throughout my rotations, my task list includes many that would usually be reserved for a lawyer with a few years’ experience, such as drafting key transaction documents for a billion-dollar deal, calling a client to talk through a legal issue or running an internal training session. The partner engagement I’ve had over the Graduate Program has been the biggest stand out for me. My supervising partner and I often work one-on-one on client deliverables and have an informal catch up scheduled every few weeks to track my progress and discuss the broader goals I have for my legal career. My partner has been really instrumental in giving me the opportunity to work on softer professional skills – I’m always involved at the client level (including some business trips!) and am encouraged to kick-start my own projects.

It goes without saying that every graduate that comes through White & Case has an interest in working in an international context, and there are countless opportunities to work on global deals, which present their own unique learning opportunities and challenges. I've been fortunate to build connections with colleagues and clients in London, Tokyo, New York, Miami, Singapore, Frankfurt and Manila over the last year and a half.

Ruveena Kaliannan

One of the best opportunities you have to experience the global nature of White & Case comes early in your career, with every graduate being offered the chance to do an international rotation. After spending my first six months at the Firm in the Melbourne office, I set off to Abu Dhabi for my second rotation in Project Finance. Whilst on rotation in Abu Dhabi, not only was I able to further develop my technical legal skills under the supervision of new perspectives, but it presented the opportunity to enhance my soft-skills and cultural competencies. As you would expect, an overseas secondment goes further than the four walls of an office, and having the opportunity to fully immerse myself in a new environment has been instrumental in the way I've continued to work since returning to Melbourne given the international and diverse array of White & Case lawyers and clients.

My overseas experience exceeded my expectations – my colleagues were very welcoming and I got the opportunity to work across various teams and offices, and in a variety of areas including renewables, petrochemicals and infrastructure. A highlight was making valuable connections with colleagues in Abu Dhabi, the Middle East and further with whom I have maintained strong relationships with since settling back in Melbourne. With travel restrictions easing around the world, it's exciting that White & Case graduates can, once again, make the most of these overseas opportunities.



Corporate

Introduction: Corporate

Karun Dhaliwal

One of the great advantages of studying the Juris Doctor is that it equips students with critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills that are essential for success in the wider, corporate world.

Although the 'ordinary' route through law school might see you apply for clerkships in your penultimate year of study, there are numerous, alternative pathways that can provide equally rich opportunities for students. Even if you ultimately decide that clerkships are the route you would like to take, there is benefit in also applying for internships in the wider corporate world.

Certainly, doing so can provide greater insight, clarity and understanding of life as a working professional in a corporate environment. Consisting of corporations such as management consulting, accounting, and banking firms, pursuing a corporate career is a means of exercising your legal knowledge, drawing upon your commercial acumen and using your soft skills to be part of a rewarding team that solves novel, real-world problems. Whether it's providing strategic advice to improve organisations, tailoring bespoke banking solutions for corporate or private clients, or evaluating contemporary financial operations to secure a more efficient future, a career in the corporate world is multifaceted, challenging and engaging.

Furthermore, establishing networks of clients and strong relationships founded on trust, these jobs are both professionally and personally fulfilling. This section of the guide focusses on careers within the wider corporate space. We hope you enjoy reading about the informative and varied experiences of our authors. If you can imagine yourself doing what Flagstaff Partners does or solving problems like those explained by Rica Immanuel, we would implore you to be curious, to be brave and to not exercise haste if you have any trepidation about using your Law degree to apply for jobs outside the legal sector too!

Investment Banking: Where Science and Art Meet

Rica Immanuel – Flagstaff Partners

What is investment banking and what does a day in the life of an investment banker look like?

At Flagstaff Partners, we act as our clients' trusted adviser on matters of the utmost importance. Our core service is providing independent and strategic corporate finance advice for clients ranging from large listed and non-listed entities (e.g., ANZ, BHP, The Star, REA Group, Treasury Wine Estates, etc), to family-owned businesses, governments, and universities.

Most days start with getting up to speed on news and any company announcements. During earnings announcement season, typically we dial-in to earnings calls in the morning to understand how the reporting company has performed over the period and any strategic or other material developments.

What follows varies from day-to-day, which is the most exciting part of the job. In one week, we could be advising multiple clients in completely different sectors with distinct opportunities and risks. The range of outputs required also varies; I could be fully immersed in a financial model one day and the next, a managing director might ask me what the best transaction structure for our client would be, having regard to various requirements under the Corporations Act, ASX listing rules or Takeovers Panel guidance notes (i.e., documents law students know and love).

What analysts and associates often predominantly focus on (amongst other things) is valuation, be it for a potential M&A transaction, capital raising, or other corporate finance matters. While valuation and some of the more technical aspects of investment banking can appear intimidating at first, analysts are provided with offsite technical training as well as fortnightly in-house training to ensure we are fully equipped with the appropriate resources and support.

Lastly, at Flagstaff, we are encouraged to gain as much client exposure as early as possible. This means, with the guidance of senior team members, we learn how to present and build relationships directly with our clients. Therefore, in a 'typical' day, I am often preparing for and heading off to a client meeting.

Are any of the legal skills we learned relevant to the job?

Absolutely and in many ways! I was of the view that investment banking would be predominantly quantitative but was pleasantly surprised to learn that it is as much art as it is science.

In terms of transferrable skills, problem solving is a start. Beyond that, our legal reasoning training has prepared us well in methodical problem solving. The classic "Issue, Rule, Application and Conclusion" (IRAC) structure that we use religiously in the classroom still anchors my approach to most tasks in the office. In addition, our advice is often underpinned or supported by relevant precedents. This is when your research skills come into play. Lastly, your experience in delivering a well-articulated written and oral presentation assists in efficiently communicating the deliverables to internal and external stakeholders.

At Flagstaff, there are a number of us who have legal experience and/or training before transitioning to investment banking. One of Flagstaff's Deputy Chairmen, David Williamson had spent most of his 34-year legal career as a Corporate partner at Ashurst (previously Blake Dawson) before joining Flagstaff. In addition, he was Head of Group Legal and Chief Compliance Officer at BHP Billiton and is currently a member of the Takeovers Panel. Similarly, Ben Depiazzi who is an associate at Flagstaff, started his career as a lawyer at Clayton Utz where he also spent a one-year secondment at the Takeovers Panel.

What are the other benefits the job offers?

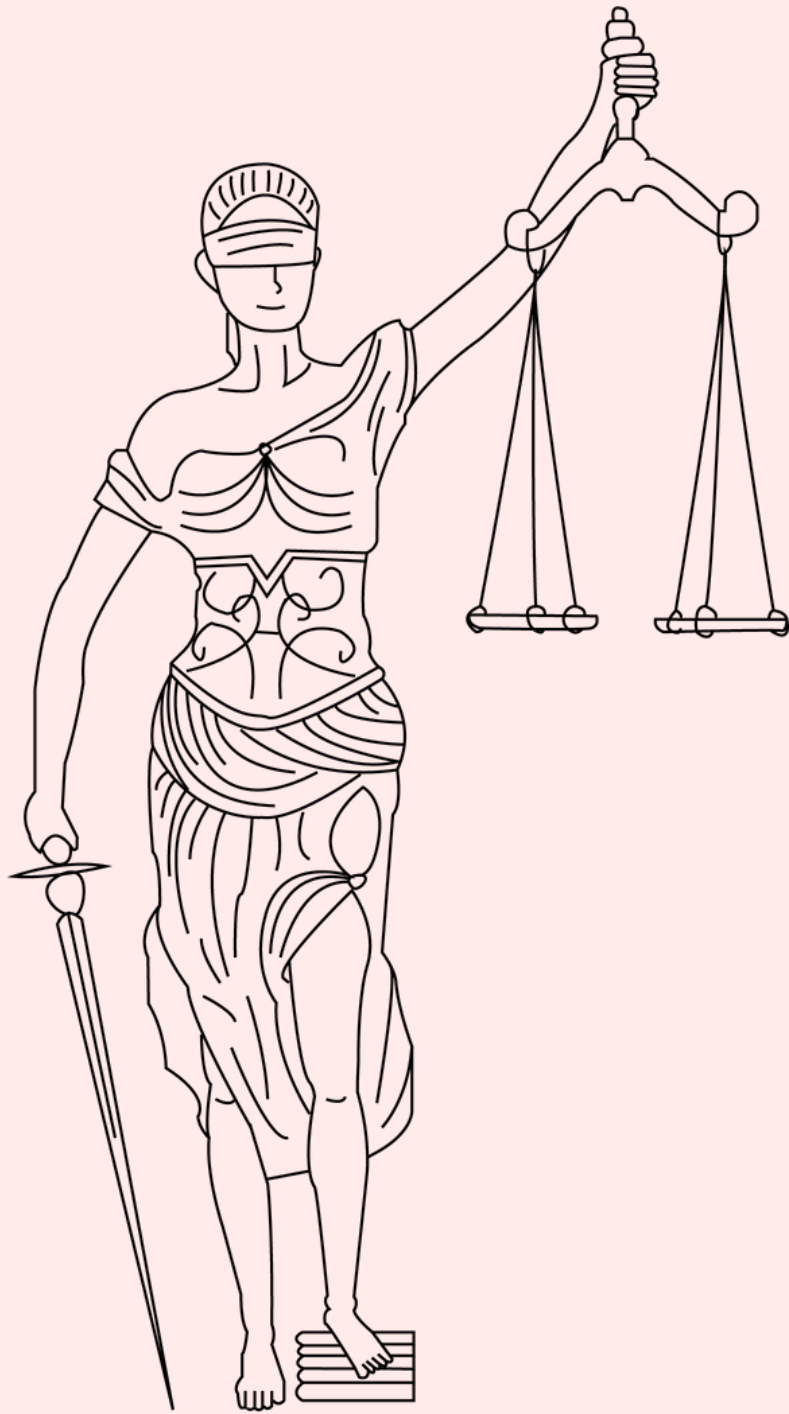
At Flagstaff, we have a lean and flat structure that provides analysts the opportunity to have meaningful contribution to client and transaction responsibility. Further, the senior leaders are as involved as everyone else, which means their breadth of experience and knowledge is fully accessible for us to leverage in our learning and development.

Further, Flagstaff offers a mentorship program, where each of us is paired with a mentor. This program has provided me with the resources and opportunities to navigate the profession and pursue my personal developments.

Last but not least, we place a significant emphasis on team culture. One initiative we have to continue fostering this culture is through regular formal and informal team activities, such as the whole-firm ski trip (from which we just returned). This creates a strong sense of collegiality that makes some of the longer days feel easier and the good days even better.

Career opportunities at Flagstaff Partners

Flagstaff offers internship and graduate opportunities to penultimate and final year students. For more information, visit www.flagstaffpartners.com and feel free to reach out directly to me or my colleagues if you would like to learn more about investment banking at Flagstaff Partners.



Criminal Law

Introduction: Criminal Law

Vivian Tan

A career in criminal justice is busy, rewarding, surprising — and often misunderstood. While criminal justice is one of the most well-known areas of legal practice, the actual practice of criminal law is nothing like what is depicted in popular culture. In Australia, criminal law is usually dealt with at an individual state level, with only some major crimes such as money laundering and sexual misconduct under the Commonwealth's jurisdiction. As such, states have individual criminal codes, such as the *Crimes Act 1958* (Victoria) or the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Queensland).

Generally, criminal lawyers are categorised as ones who defend accused persons, and ones who specialise in criminal prosecution. A career in prosecution will often start with your state's criminal prosecutor; in Victoria, we have the Office of Public Prosecutions. The job of a prosecution lawyer will start once criminal charges have been laid. A prosecution lawyer will collaborate with victims and witnesses of crimes, the investigating agency (which is usually the state police), and other advocates in preparation for court. On the other hand, the job of a defence lawyer will usually start once an individual is accused of a crime. A defence lawyer will confer with his or her client to obtain instructions, appear in court, and communicate with the police and/or prosecutor at some stage after his or her client is charged. Clients who are remanded in custody are visited regularly and kept informed about the status of their cases.

If you're looking for opportunities to do criminal justice work as a law student, you might want to look at volunteering with the Department of Justice and Community Safety. If you are interested in working in prosecution, you can work at the Office of Public Prosecutions. Otherwise, consider Victoria Legal Aid or volunteering at a community legal centre.

A career in criminal justice is challenging — but if you're willing to rise to the challenge, you will be hard-pressed to work in a more rewarding, diverse, or intellectually stimulating practice area.

I wish you the best of luck with your careers journey!

A Day in the Life of: A Legal Trainee at the Office of Public Prosecutions

Ruby Stewart

My day usually starts at 9AM. I get off the train at Flagstaff Station and walk past the Magistrates' Court, where people are milling about waiting for proceedings to begin. Often, there will be media setting up cameras, waiting to catch a glimpse of whatever high-profile case is due to be heard that morning.

I arrive at my office and see that I have been allocated a new file, so I send emails to the police informant and the defence solicitor to let them know I have carriage of the matter. My job involves working closely with lots of different parties – police, defence lawyers, Crown Prosecutors, the courts, and victims of crime.

I mark any upcoming court dates in my calendar, and then begin reading the brief of evidence, noting down issues to discuss with my supervisor. At the OPP, legal trainees are allocated their own cases under the supervision of an experienced solicitor, rather than simply assisting on tasks for more senior lawyers. This means that I will be responsible for making a recommendation about which charges proceed and which should be withdrawn based on the evidence and the public interest. Depending on the matter and the nature of the recommendation, this will then be reviewed and considered by a senior solicitor within the legal practice, a Crown Prosecutor, or in some cases the Director.

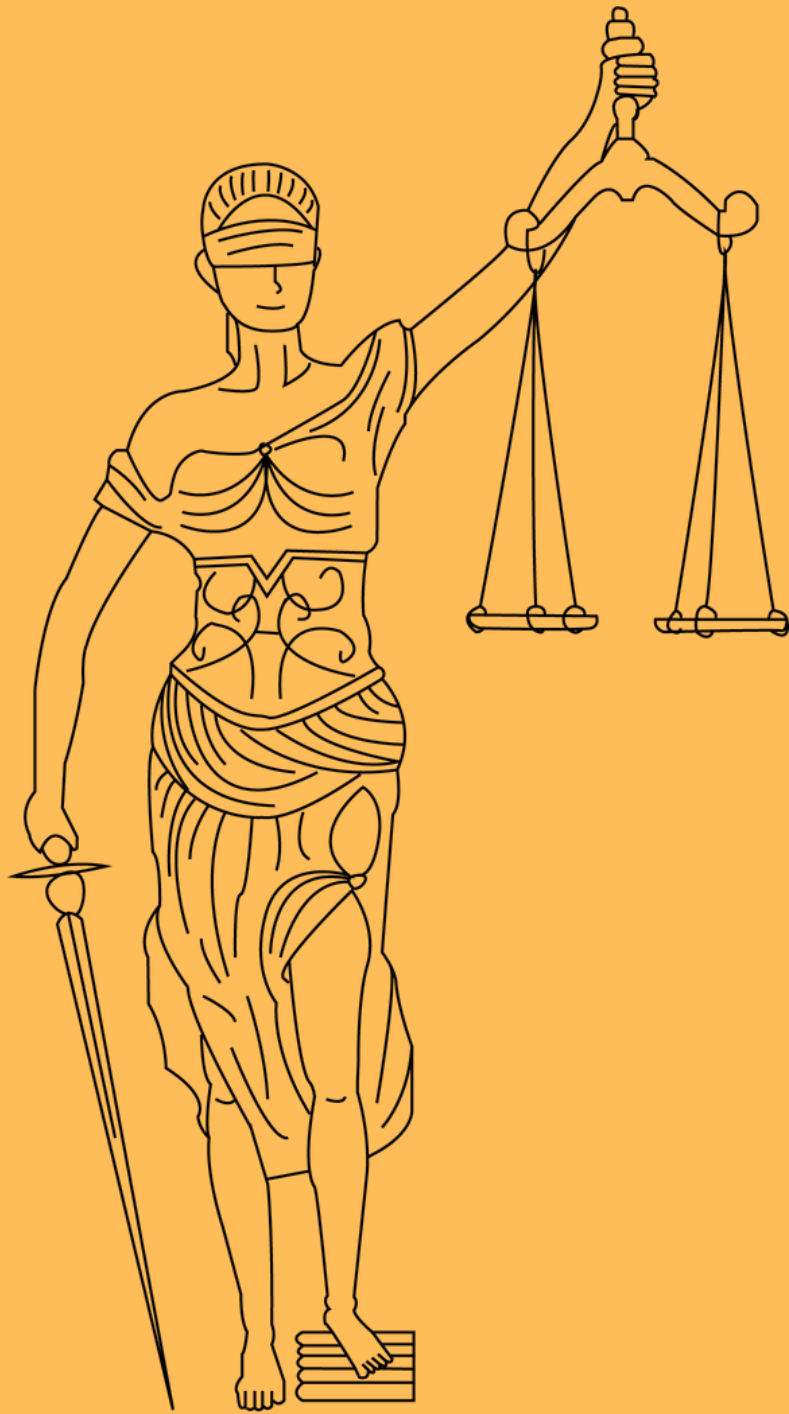
Later that morning, I hear about an interesting trial being run by a senior lawyer in the office. The key witness is due to give evidence, and the prosecution intends to play covert recordings of discussions that this witness had with the accused. At 11AM, another trainee and I decide to head over to the County Court to watch. I kick off my sneakers and put on my court shoes - the OPP has a 'dress for your day' policy, allowing employees to opt-out of the rigid formality of legal attire when they have no court commitments.

As I enter the courtroom, I bow to the judge, and then quietly take a seat. We watch as the Crown Prosecutor carefully walks the witness through her evidence. Defence counsel then begins cross-examination, circling back over issues and pointing out inconsistencies in the testimony. I find the proceedings fascinating and have to fight the urge to look over at the jurors, curious to know what they make of this strange legal world. After court, we grab a coffee and discuss the trial, musing over the different advocacy styles of counsel and wondering whether the evidence assisted or hindered the Crown case.

At lunchtime, the legal trainees sit together swapping court stories and laughing at our mistakes - one spilled water all over the bar table while instructing in court; another flashed her Myki at the County Court security guard, assuming it was her Court Pass, while standing with two well-respected barristers (okay, that one was me...). As we eat, we discuss our cases and the legal issues they present. Every matter is so uniquely different – I have learned the most from listening to my colleagues.

In the afternoon, I've organised a conference with the victim in one of my cases. The OPP has a social worker allocated to each file, and together we discuss what updates to give the victim and how best to support her. I introduce myself and explain that the OPP is an organisation that works closely with police to prosecute serious crimes in Victoria. We then chat about the progress of the matter and the services available to assist her. The criminal legal system can be an intimidating environment, and the work we do helping victims and witnesses of crime navigate this system is the most important and rewarding part of my job.

At about 5:15PM, I pack up my bag to head home. As I walk back past the courts, the media has packed up for the day, and the buildings now stand silent, waiting for tomorrow's proceedings to begin.



Family Law

Introduction: Family Law

Chelsea Doyle

Family law is not an area of practice that many students are exposed to during their time at Melbourne Law School. In fact, many who practice in family law say they stumbled into the area and had not dreamt of becoming a family lawyer. That is not to say that practicing family law is not extremely rewarding, as I will discuss below, but does demonstrate that family law is everywhere in legal practice. The practice of family law intersects with many other areas of law; most small and medium-sized firms have a family law practice, in addition to, or combination with, criminal, wills & estates, and property & conveyancing divisions. Even commercial matters may be impacted by family law where, for example, assets at the centre of a transaction are also the subject of a dispute before the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA). For this reason, it is a good idea for practitioners to have a basic understanding of family law even if it is not their primary area of practice. In addition, family law is practiced under the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), a piece of federal legislation, which means you can practice family law around Australia!

The Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) deals with the division of assets and parenting arrangements for children when couples divorce or separate. The Act does not govern, for example, disputes between parents and adult children, or between siblings; a point that is not obvious from the title of the Act. Therefore, family lawyers deal with clients who are experiencing, or have experienced, the breakdown of their personal relationship. The privilege of assisting clients in their most vulnerable state through a difficult time in their lives is something very few lawyers get to experience outside of family law. This is an area in which you can make a real difference.

At the core of all family law matters is, unfortunately, a dispute. If you are interested in negotiation, mediation, dispute resolution and litigation, family law is the perfect area for you. From your first day on the job as a family lawyer you will meet with clients, draft and send proposals to the other side, negotiate with your opponent or their legal representative, engage in mediation and other forms of dispute settlement, and file or respond to court proceedings. Practicing family law is a great way hone your court craft, as there are many opportunities for junior solicitors to appear before Judicial Registrar's in the FCFCOA for first return directions or procedural hearings.

If you would like to watch a dramatized series shining the spotlight on family law, *The Split* is a great place to start! I hope you find this section of the Guide useful, and I wish you the best of luck on your career journey.

8 Skills for an Effective Family Lawyer

Lauren Battersby - Nicholes Family Lawyers

Family law is a dynamic and exciting area of practice. Each day is different from the last. If you popped into my office you might find me drafting Court documents or a mediation position statement, dictating letters to other lawyers or letters of advice to clients, reading and responding to emails, reviewing financial disclosure, inspecting medical, police or financial records produced under subpoena, speaking on the phone with a client or a barrister, preparing briefs to Counsel, Court books or tender bundles for upcoming trials, or at the coffee machine for another refill! I often have several conferences each week with new and existing clients and sometimes involving barristers or accountants. Or, you may find me at Court, instructing Counsel at a contested hearing or appearing myself on behalf of a client. Alternative dispute resolution is strongly encouraged in family law, so I represent nearly all my clients at a mediation, conciliation conference or similar dispute resolution event.

In my experience, the following qualities are crucial to be an effective family lawyer.

1. Interpersonal Skills

Family lawyers work directly with clients who are undergoing huge amounts of emotional, mental and financial stress, often feeling vulnerable, and highly invested in the outcome of their matter. Many clients are dealing with mental health struggles, arising from family violence and exacerbated by family law proceedings. When communicating with clients, showing empathy, maintaining professionalism and having the skill to acknowledge clients' concerns while focusing them on the next step for their family law matter, are of utmost importance.

2. Written and Oral Communication Skills

Communicating with clients, other lawyers, barristers and the Court in writing (via letters, Affidavits, written submissions etc) and orally (in conferences, phone calls and Court appearances) is the bread and butter of a family lawyer's work. Having the ability to speak and write clearly, articulately and concisely, and to communicate complex legal advice in a way that is accessible to clients, is crucial. I encourage students to participate in mooting, competitions or clinical placements to develop effective verbal communication skills.

3. Understanding of the Law

Family law intersects with many areas of law, including property, equity and trusts, contracts, corporations, tax law, and even public/constitutional law. Sometimes we engage lawyers specialised in one of these fields to provide discrete advice, however it is important we are sufficiently knowledgeable in these areas to identify potential issues, ask the right questions and liaise between the expert and the client. Although many matters settle by consent prior to a Final Hearing, this is not always possible and family lawyers are frequently involved in litigation. A sound understanding of evidence law is critical – no-one wants to be the solicitor whose Affidavit is nearly all struck out as inadmissible.

4. Attention to Detail

A family law barrister once said to me, 'the devil is in the detail', and he's 100% right. Whether it's identifying fishy transactions in bank statements, drafting a financial statement and ensuring the figures are correct and add up, including all relevant assets, issues and necessary indemnities in draft orders, or generally in producing quality documents and correspondence, it goes without saying that attention to detail is essential.

5. Time Management and Organisation

I work on approximately 30 client files at a time. I've developed a system that enables me to keep track of tasks and deadlines. Being able to break tasks down into 'mini tasks', prioritise according to urgency and ensure big tasks are allocated sufficient time is key to avoiding becoming overwhelmed and missing deadlines, with serious consequences for clients.

6. Adaptability

It is one thing to have a task list, it is another to reprioritise when urgent issues arise. Often in family law, the status of or approach to a matter will change overnight. For example, one party might breach an order, send a letter making various allegations, or file an urgent application in Court. This means family lawyers must learn to reprioritise tasks to respond to unexpected situations and changing circumstances.

7. Boundary Setting

It is important to set boundaries enabling work-life balance, to take care of yourself, perform at your best, and work sustainably. This is a challenge I continue to face and there are occasions (for example when preparing for trial) where late nights are unavoidable. I've found my supervising partners to be receptive and accommodating, however, when I've communicated my personal boundaries, capacity and need for assistance.

8. Developing a Support Network

Lastly, developing a support network and not being afraid to lean on that network will benefit you in spades. Whether it's debriefing with colleagues following a conference, calling a friend or family member after a big day, or catching up for coffee with a professional mentor, these simple practices provide stability, guidance and perspective.

Family law is an incredibly interesting and rewarding area of practice that allows you to engage very directly with clients and the law. If you're interested in the field, I encourage you to work on the above skills and give it a go!

Practice Management: From University to the Workplace & What I Wish I Knew as a Law Student About Family Law

Glenn Harvey - Pearce Webster Dugdales Lawyers

Now that you are about to transition from University to the workplace, you may have thought that the hard work has been done, however the reality is that you are now entering into the next stage of your working life with another learning curve to negotiate.

Whilst a Law Degree trains you to engage in critical thinking, analytically organising and managing data, University does not provide you with all of the skills you need to be competent in your new role in private practice.

Typically, your first role will be in a Junior position, at times undertaking what may seem to be very mundane and unenjoyable tasks.

However, it is important you learn everything from the “ground up” and the practical tasks associated with legal practice, which are not dealt with at University.

Non-legal or support staff at your firm are a valuable resource.

Always treat them, regardless of position, as you would like to be treated yourself.

Never take that support or guidance for granted.

Support staff can “make or break” a young Lawyer, they have significant skills and experience and you will benefit enormously if you care to reach out for assistance.

My experience is that a helping hand will almost always be given if the right approach is made.

Continuing legal education is critical, the learning never stops until you retire. Whilst there is ongoing yearly compulsory legal practice seminars, a good Lawyer will read “that article”, keep up to date with case law and have a good knowledge and understanding of all Acts, Rules and Regulations in each area of Law in which they are engaged.

A lack of knowledge in your area of law will be found out very quickly by your peers and members of the Judiciary.

Working in private practice, whilst enjoyable, does involve responsibility and is at times quite stressful, particularly if you are not prepared and organised.

There are many surveys which show that many lawyers suffer from depression. Therefore it is extremely important that you have a good work life balance.

Allocate time each week for yourself, friends and family, you can still be successful without having to burn the midnight oil every day, take that holiday when it is due.

My perception is that law students often do not feel that Family Law would be an area of law they would like to have as their primary practice. I have spoken to many young lawyers over the years and more often than not, they did not choose to study family law.

Is it because there is a perception that Family Law deals mainly with parenting issues, house and garden cases and is always stressful and emotional?

On the contrary, family law, whilst demanding at times, is a great area of law, and it is very satisfying to achieve outcomes for your clients, some of whom are vulnerable.

In order to become a competent Family Law Solicitor, you need knowledge and expertise in many varied areas of law including, inter alia:

- Commercial Law
- Company Law
- Criminal Law
- Domestic Violence
- Bankruptcy
- Third party disputes
- Taxation
- Trusts

In addition to competency in those areas, you need to have good interpersonal skills and empathy to deal with clients and your opponents, always remaining objective.

These skills are still not taught to Lawyers during their University training nor are skills relating to the running of a business.

Clients will vary from the person working in a manual labouring job up to the CEO of a large corporation or a prominent Politician and everyone in between same.

You will therefore need to hone and work on your interpersonal skills and how to deal with emotional and at times difficult clients (and opponents). There continues to be no training at University for these important skills.

A lack of interpersonal skills and knowing how to deal with people (including the ability to be objective) will make your job as a Family Lawyer much more difficult.

My advice is to look for a Mentor (who can provide advice), there may be someone in a senior position at your firm who can provide that role or there may be external options available to you.

Volunteering at Community Legal Services will also give you a good introduction to private practice and you will not only benefit the community but increase your skill set.

For those of you thinking of working as a Barrister in the area of family law, my view is that it would be prudent, generally speaking, to work as a Solicitor for at least one or two years before applying to join the Bar.

As one Barrister said to me years ago, "Don't go to the Bar if you don't enjoy having an argument everyday".

Lastly, the role of a Family Law Solicitor (and working in any area of law) requires very good time management skills.

Time management is critical in order to reduce and/or avoid unnecessary stress associated with working in private practice.

There will of course always be times of stress (often associated with poor communication with your client as to their case and in particular their costs) but if you are organised, keep your clients informed and have good supports and good systems in place you will reduce same significantly.

This will make your life much easier and your role as a Solicitor much more enjoyable.

Law (including family law) is a wonderful career, good luck.



Government

Introduction: Government

Amity Clayfield

The phrase 'government lawyering' may evoke TV drama style visions of a team of blue-suited professionals advising the Prime Minister or President on an imminently important matter of national security. However, in practice the public sector is a broad category which encompasses a wide range of roles, that may not immediately jump to the minds of many students. From the Office of Public Prosecutions to Museums Victoria, from State to Commonwealth, there is a role in the public sector for students with any number or breadth of interests. Government may be an area of interest for students who want to use their legal skills to give back to the community, are interested in social justice and who want to address big-picture policy questions.

Earlier this year MULSS held a Government Careers panel, where lawyers, policy analysts, and Heads of Department from the VGSO, Commonwealth Treasury and Department of Premier and Cabinet spoke to us about their career pathways into Government, and the plethora of opportunities available to graduates in the public law sector. In this section of the guide we hear from one of the panelists from the Government Careers evening, Toby Hemming (*Deputy Secretary and General Counsel, Legal Legislation and Governance for the Department of Premier and Cabinet*) as he reflects on the rewards of a career in the public service. Toby discusses the benefits of working in government as a legal trainee, and outlines the diversity of departments, practice areas and opportunities available to graduates.

The public sector provides law graduates with opportunities ranging from legislative drafting, to policy, to providing advice to departments, to litigating issues of public interest. If you are interested in pursuing a career as a lawyer in a flexible and diverse workplace, or in a career that utilises your legal skills & knowledge such as policy advising or analysis: government is a rewarding pathway that you may wish to consider!

Work with Purpose – Become a Victorian Government Lawyer

Toby Hemming - DPC

The public service is unique in its ability to shape the future of our communities, and government lawyers are at its very heart. They support critical decision-making, influence policy and law reform, run high-stakes litigation, and help deliver projects and services that improve the lives of all Victorians.

Government legal work is hugely varied, stimulating and challenging, and the reward of public service is hard to match.

Government law spans the full spectrum of practice areas, including traditional areas of public law (constitutional, administrative, human rights and discrimination) through to employment law, property, planning, corporate and commercial work (among many others). And government lawyers are engaged by all parts of government. Major departments such as Health, Education and Justice require significant legal expertise, as do agencies as diverse as the Environment Protection Authority, Victoria Police, Museums Victoria and Wage Inspectorate Victoria. The Victorian Government Solicitor's Office alone employs over 150 lawyers.

Working at the centre of government, government lawyers draft legislation and lead law reform. They guide government's response in times of crisis, help deliver huge infrastructure projects and provide a critical check on executive power. Government lawyers also represent the State at Royal Commissions, run investigations and prosecutions, and manage large commercial transactions.

The size and diversity of the public sector means there are roles to suit lawyers whatever their expertise and experience. It's also part of the reason it's a great training ground for graduates.

Legal trainees get meaningful exposure to clients, the opportunity to manage files, and there's a very strong focus on learning and development, including great mentoring and secondment opportunities.

Beyond the trainee year, there are opportunities to move and gain experience in different agencies and practice areas. There are also opportunities to move to non-legal government roles.

To work as a government lawyer is contribute to the community. There is great satisfaction in serving the common good, and in fact it's the reason so many lawyers choose to work for government.

The scale, reach and richness of work sets the public sector apart from most other employers. A fulfilling and rewarding career awaits, with opportunities across large and small agencies.

Other benefits include:

- work with high-performing, publicly minded colleagues;
- work in close-knit, well-supported teams;
- become a specialist, or work across practice areas;
- excellent working conditions, competitive salaries and flexible working arrangements.

Arrangements vary from agency to agency, but please look out for 2023 graduate opportunities in the coming months.

Toby Hemming
Deputy Secretary & General Counsel
Department of Premier & Cabinet

toby.hemming@dpc.vic.gov.au

Government: What and Why?

Chris Girardi - DPC

When an opportunity in the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) came knocking late last year, I had to think long and hard about whether taking a step into the world of government policy (as opposed to legal practice, or sticking with my gig in legal tech) was the right path for my first year out of law school.

What helped me through that decision was a perspective I'd encourage you to take regardless of whether you're looking for government work, life in a commercial firm, or something else – think of the first few years of your career as development opportunities, rather than a checkbox final destination after uni.

I ended up accepting the role in DPC, deciding I was being presented with an amazing opportunity for development given the breadth of the work I could do, and the people I could meet. I knew that even if I found it wasn't for me, I'd still have learnt a lot over my grad year, and could take those skills with me wherever I wanted to go next.

I still don't know exactly what I want to do with my career even at the end of this grad year, but I do know that starting out in government has helped me meet some amazing people, exposed me to a whole range of exciting areas, and taught me a lot about how to deliver advice clearly and succinctly.

What does government work look like?

DPC is a 'central agency' meaning it's fast-paced and has a birds-eye view over everything happening in the Victorian Government, often by having different DPC teams 'shadow' the policy work of other departments. My substantive role is in DPC's 'First Peoples-State Relations' Group, which is unique in that it's responsible for driving the government's Aboriginal affairs policy work along with government's engagement with the treaty process and Yoorrook Justice Commission.

My team in FPSR focussed on whole-of-government self-determination and transformation work. For me this meant reviewing and improving Cabinet submissions from different departments to ensure they aligned with the needs and expectations of Aboriginal Victorians, and reporting on key outcomes for Victoria's Aboriginal community – alongside of course briefing the Premier and Minister on key priorities. It was a great experience because it meant that one day I was liaising on a Cabinet submission about sexual and reproductive health, and the next on something totally different like police powers.

I'm now on rotation in the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in the Energy Strategy Division's 'Distributed Energy Resources' Branch – things like rooftop solar, electric vehicles and neighbourhood batteries. As a 'line agency,' DELWP is focussed on specific policy areas, with a longer-term focus. That's meant slower burn work than DPC, like running a public consultation on voltage management, or designing policy related to electricity demand.

I make that distinction not to say one pace is better than the other, but rather to point out that there are so many opportunities to suit your preferred work style in government.

But what about the law?

I'm so glad you asked. Day to day policy work almost always uses my legal skills – particularly when dealing with governance frameworks, legislation, quirky subordinate instruments, or human rights impact assessments.

But, of course, there are also opportunities to do true legal work in government. Far beyond the VGSO or OPP, each department will have in-house lawyers who provide a range of services – from dealing with contractors, to planning law, admin law and more. I'm currently completing my PLT alongside work and have been fortunate enough to undertake a placement with DPC's Office of General Counsel (OGC) – enough acronyms yet?

As part of OGC's public law team, I've drafted advice to the Premier regarding his obligations and powers under various acts, and on extending subordinate legislation. I've also drafted advice for DPC executives regarding the caretaker period in the lead up to the state election and assisted with an FOI matter – all in just a couple of weeks! So, there really is a lot out there.

What do I apply for?

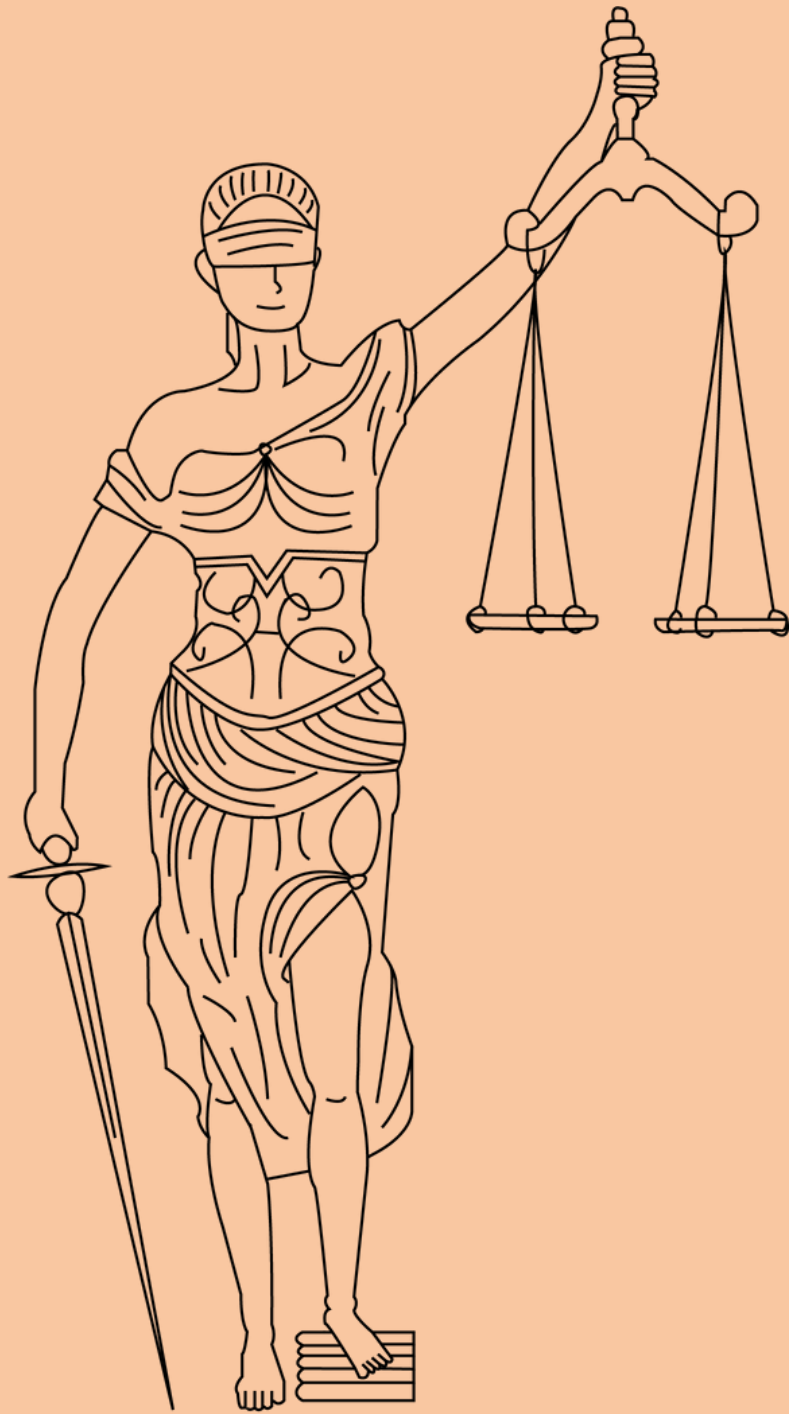
I have no doubt that, given the bright sparks you all are at MLS, you'll be well placed for policy and legal roles in government. But remember, grad programs are not the be all and end all. In many ways, the connections you make and experience you get along the way are just as, if not more important.

For example, I have my awesome executive mentor (one of the development perks of the grad program) to thank for making introductions that helped me land my PLT placement. So, don't underestimate the value of just meeting people.

That said, if you're wondering what to apply for:

- The Victorian Government Graduate Program takes applicants in two intakes each year. The first round (including 'Generalist' policy roles) opens early in the year, but the law stream generally opens up during Round 2 in the middle of the year.
- Entry-level policy roles crop up all the time in a whole range of policy areas – in particular, search for the VPS2–4 pay grades.
- Entry-level legal roles are also out there, but they're a little harder to land right out of uni since they generally require you to have been admitted – generally search for the VPS3 pay grade.
- There are a range of Paralegal and Legal Support Officer roles popping up all the time (often VPS2–3). They can be a great way to get your foot in the door and make some of those all-important connections – even part time while you're studying.

But, regardless of where you want to head after law school, bear in mind that that first job is your first step on a far larger journey. It's perfectly ok to not know exactly what you want to do, but you should always make the most of the opportunities available to you to meet new people and learn new things. Government careers have those opportunities in spades, so do yourself a favour and check them out!



Practical Legal Training

Introduction: Practical Legal Training

Charlotte Verley

Upon the completion of your law degree - a final step is required in order to become admitted as a practising lawyer in the Australian legal profession; this is known as Practical Legal Training.

Practical Legal Training (PLT) is a compulsory qualification that generally involves a six to twelve-month program that includes a combination of workplace placement, coursework and assessments. The course aims to prepare law graduates with the requisite *practical* skills for a practising lawyer. While your law degree is designed to provide you with legal knowledge - your PLT is ultimately designed to provide you with legal skills to enable you to use this knowledge effectively.

There are different pathways for completing your PLT; namely either through a PLT course provider or through supervised legal training at a law firm. While some law firms cover the cost of PLT as part of their graduate program, generally law graduates will need to fund their own PLT. Importantly, FEE-HELP is available to eligible students and instalment payment plans are also offered by each PLT provider.

In Victoria, there are two PLT providers:

- Leo Cussen Centre for Law
- The College of Law

Both institutions offer variations on the course structure - providing face-to-face learning options, online courses and blended models. Each PLT provider also affords law graduates the option to enrol in either part-time or full-time courses and offer multiple intakes per year. The variations on the course structure are designed to provide law graduates with flexibility to manage a work/study balance.

Upon successful completion of your PLT, you will be awarded a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and will be eligible to apply for admission.

Where Does PLT Fit into Becoming a Lawyer

Leo Cussen

You've been dreaming of the day you'll become a lawyer. That's the end goal – that's why you've been working so hard. But what's the actual pathway to becoming an admitted lawyer?

What's next after Law School?

Completing your law degree is just one step in the journey to becoming a lawyer. Following your law degree, you need to complete your Practical Legal Training (PLT) and be awarded your Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (GDLP) to be admitted as a practicing lawyer. But how does completing your PLT fit into your pathway to becoming a lawyer?

What is PLT?

While your law degree teaches you the theoretical understanding of the law and legal systems, PLT is aimed at teaching you the practical skills - how to work effectively within that system. At Leo Cussen, we like to think of PLT as lawyer school. While completing your LLB or JD teaches you the law, PLT teaches you how to be a lawyer. Completing your PLT will help develop the skills you need to work as an entry-level lawyer.

Learning through practice

Through your law degree, you have gained a well-rounded knowledge of the theoretical side of the law and PLT builds on this and helps teach you the skills you'll use in your day-to-day work as a lawyer, such as drafting legal documents, negotiating with other parties, and interviewing clients. And that's where PLT comes in.

PLT at Leo Cussen offers an opportunity to move away from lectures and put away your textbooks. Instead, you'll apply your theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting that replicates real legal practice.

We believe the best way to learn the skills for practice, is by practicing those skills in a supportive environment that replicates the real legal practice. Jasmine, a Leo Cussen graduate, believes "the practical assessments enabled [her] to develop practical skills that have really set [her] up as a junior lawyer today." By learning the skills for practice, you can enter the profession with confidence.

Be guided by experienced lawyers

Mentoring is a key aspect of Leo Cussen's PLT. Every grad is grouped with an experienced lawyer, who will act as their mentor. This mentor will provide you with guidance that will help develop your skills as you take your first steps into your own career in the legal industry.

Jasmine, a Leo Cussen graduate says that "the mentor relationship was a space for [her] to seek honest feedback on [her] work from a person [she] really respected and aspired to be". Not only are you able to gain real experience with real lawyers, you receive immediate feedback to help hone your skills to become the whole lawyer.

The journey to becoming a practising lawyer may be a long one with your law degree and PLT being two vital steps. PLT is all about preparing you for your future as a practising lawyer. And the best way to do that is through practical training.

Leo Cussen's PLT course is aimed at ensuring that you're able to step into the profession as a well-rounded and confident lawyer. The important skills you learn at Leo Cussen will prepare you for a successful career in the legal profession.

Find out more about PLT at Leo Cussen, visit leocussen.edu.au/plt

What our PLT Grads Say About Us

College of Law

What Our PLT Grads Say About Us?

My experience with the College of Law was overwhelmingly positive' – Emma, PLT Graduate

The College of Law delivers Practical Legal Training (PLT) to university law student graduates and is the largest provider of the PLT in Australia. The PLT is a gateway to admission to legal practice and your next step to transition from a law student to a qualified lawyer.

We surveyed our current PLT graduates to seek their feedback about why these choose to complete their PLT with us and what they enjoyed the most about our program. They identified many various benefits to undertaking the College's PLT and we've taken the opportunity to outline four predominant reasons persistently stood out.

Program Structure

I believe the College of Law's practical approach to training new lawyers gives you a real edge. Assessments are modeled on real work you would do every day as a lawyer, and you're taught by practising lawyers, not career academics. This made such a difference for me. *(Ram, graduated November 2021)*

I use the skills I learned during the Practical Legal Training program regularly in my position as a Solicitor, particularly the practical skills of interviewing clients, drafting legal documents and advocacy skills. The oral presentation tasks we participated in during the attendance week assisted me in gaining confidence to appear in Court. I found The College of Law's Practice Papers were a very useful practical reference tool for common daily tasks. *(Jessica, graduated in October 2020)*

The work really is designed to equip you as a lawyer, in terms of the content and the pace. It feels like a lot of work at the time, but it is so worth it for the confidence and reassurance you feel at the end of the course when you know you're ready to be a lawyer. *(Chelsea, graduated in January 2022)*

It helped me to exercise my knowledge through simulated situations, guiding you through various approaches to analyse, research and resolve a legal problem. PLT taught us how to think critically, manage clients and conflicts of interest, and approach the issue of costs disclosure early on. It really helps you navigate many complex issues associated with legal work, especially in the early stages of your career. *(Sheryl, graduated in August 2021)*

The coursework reflected real-life scenarios, enabling me to gain greater insights into other areas of the law that I hadn't been exposed to. The lecturers across each unit always made themselves available, addressed the questions I had and were real specialists in their lines of work, which meant that the feedback I received was both timely and current to the law in today's society. *(Paula, graduated August 2021)*

Do you dislike the pressure exams put on you? Or the 3 hours you have to sit still and write out your answers? Well forget all of that with the College of Law. There are no exams in which you get graded – rather you participate in oral presentations with your lecturer, which are more like constructive conversations a junior law has with their senior supervising lawyer. *(Amy, graduated in July 2021).*

I feel PLT studies helped with what I do at work by providing a more hands-on approach to learning, in doing so, it gives you more of an idea as to what will be expected once you get into practice. *(Damon, graduated in May 2020)*

Flexible Learning Options

The flexibility was by far what set the experience apart. Having access to most of the material online as soon as the course started was invaluable. *(Kerala, graduated in August 2018)*

I selected The College of Law as my PLT provider because of its excellent reputation for offering flexible, online study options for law graduates. I knew in advance that I was going to be employed full-time for the majority of my course and I was eager to be admitted as a lawyer as soon as possible. *(Georgia, graduated in September 2020)*

The flexibility of the PLT programs offered by the College of Law is certainly very well-suited to the different situations that those seeking to gain admission to practice law face. Personally, I currently work full-time and benefit from having my online training and task submissions spaced out. It allows me to better organise my schedule and complete the tasks at a time that I find most convenient and planned around my work and personal commitments. *(Eashwar, Trainee)*

As I was working four days a week at the time, I decided to enrol in the Practical Legal Training course part-time and completed it in eight months. The pace of the course and assessments were manageable and having the flexibility to complete assessments ahead of time was also beneficial. *(Jessica, graduated in July 2021)*

As I was already lucky enough to be in the workforce and applying my commercial / legal skills on a day-to-day basis, it was important for me to find a PLT provider that worked with me and my circumstances, rather than the other way around. With The College of Law, I was able to perform all the coursework online and negotiate my due dates (where necessary), to ensure I was still able to manage my work commitments. *(Paula, graduated August 2021)*

We care about your success

They want you to succeed, and do everything in their power to see you succeed. The teachers and support staff at The College of Law were always helpful, friendly, and approachable. I find the teachers and support staff at The College of Law to be very supportive in career preparation, and I have kept in touch with many of the staff since completing the Practical Legal Training course. *(Jessica, graduated in July 2021)*

The support you receive is second to none – I would often email my tutors with any questions I had, and the oral feedback you receive after your assignment is invaluable. *(Kerala, graduated in August 2018)*

I highly recommend the College of Law particularly because of the standard of supervisors. The supervisors are some of the most knowledgeable professionals in the field so you're really learning from the best. The supervisors are also very accommodating to your needs which was a big help for me. *(Chelsea, graduated in January 2022).*

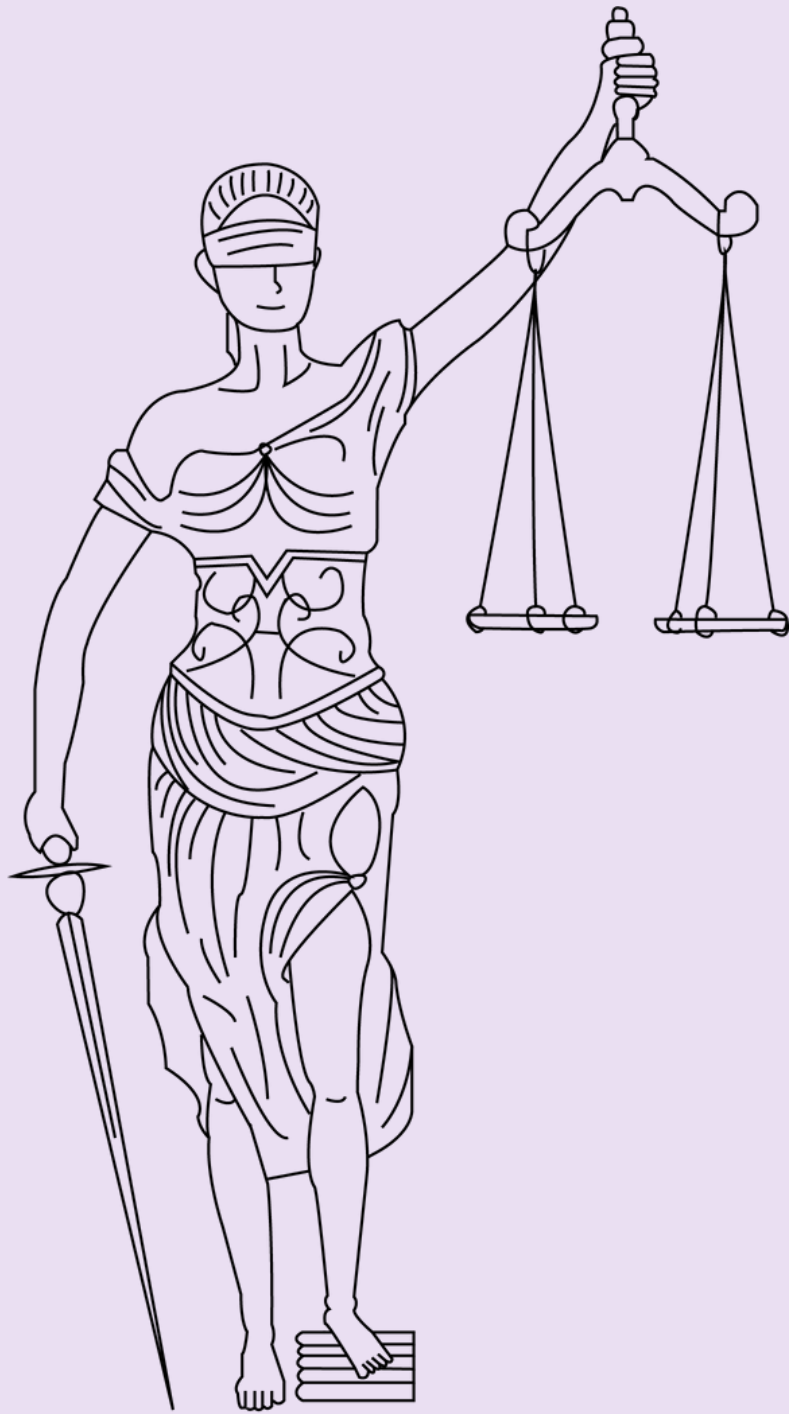
I also had a great experiences with the College of Law lecturers. As they are lawyers, they are very informative, helpful and most importantly, available to assist and support you along the way. It therefore felt very much like a mentorship arrangement, which myself and the other students in my cohort really appreciated. *(Amy, graduated in July 2021).*

Trusted by the Legal Profession

The first time I heard about the College of Law was from my commercial clients. It turns out that the more I talk about PLT with my clients, the more I find that businesses prefer College of Law for PLT. *(David, graduated in June 2022)*

I had heard good reviews about the College of Law and it recommended to me by my boss. Everything is very practical and I feel like it's a great transition from university studies into the real life legal practice. *(Anonymous Graduate)*

I decided to enrol in the Practical Legal Training course at The College of Law as it was highly recommended by students who had previously completed the course. *(Jessica, graduated in July 2021)*



Public Interest

Introduction: Public Interest

Estelle Sutherland

The public interest law sector is a varied and often underrepresented area of law. Students with a passion for social justice are likely to find a career in public interest law extremely rewarding. Public interest law covers a wide range of interest areas and allows students to utilise their legal expertise to provide assistance to others.

The career options available to students interested in public interest law are numerous. These include working for community legal centres, the government sector and charities. A wide range of issue areas are also encompassed in the public interest sector. These may include criminal law, family law, employment law, migration law and law reform amongst others.

While the pathway to a career in public interest law may seem less defined than traditional clerkship and graduate avenues, there are a number of pathways which students may take to enter this sector. Volunteering at a community legal center or undertaking internship subjects whilst studying are valuable experiences for students wishing to pursue a career in public interest law. It is also possible for many lawyers to complete pro bono work whilst working in the private sector.

Overall, the opportunities available to students interested in public interest law are extensive and provide a valuable avenue for students who wish to use their legal skills in a non-corporate setting.

Civil and Human Rights Practice at VALS

Jay Chandramohan - Senior Lawyer

What does VALS do?

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) is an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation, established in 1973 to provide culturally safe legal and community justice services to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people across Victoria.

VALS' legal practice operates in three key areas:

- The Criminal Law Practice represents Aboriginal people in mainstream and Koori Courts;
- The Civil and Human Rights Practice assists across a range of legal issues, including tenancy, police complaints, discrimination, coronial inquests, and consumer law;
- The Aboriginal Families Practice represents families in family and child protection matters.

How did I come to work in social justice?

My legal studies commenced as a mature-aged student, following a financially rewarding but unfulfilling professional career as I wanted to pursue a career in social justice. This realisation stemmed from my background as a migrant, and the daily inequalities I had observed and experienced.

From day one at MLS, the overwhelming student narrative focussed on commercial law. It was difficult to cut through this emphasis, so I did my own investigations to understand the social justice sector, the nature of the work, and discover opportunities to contribute as a student. Classes and conversations with peers and staff including Professors Tobin, Malkin and Oswald fostered and encouraged my career plans.

During my JD, amongst other volunteer roles, I worked with VALS for about a year. Following my admission, I worked in a generalist practice and as an employment lawyer but kept in touch with VALS staff. I wasn't successful in my first application with VALS but was ultimately selected for a role with the Civil and Human Rights team about 2 years ago.

What do I do on a day-to-day basis?

The Civil and Human Rights Practice supports Indigenous clients to uphold their rights, challenge unjust laws and stand up against unfair and corrupt practices.

The nature of the work is varied. I manage a caseload of files, support volunteers and secondees, work with our policy team on submissions, undertake regional outreach and community legal education, and implement projects with pro bono partners.

Larger matters we work on involve strategic litigation, such as removing children from adult prison, as well as facilitating access to Koori courts and coronial inquests, particularly deaths in custody. These cases involve partners including pro bono firms, Victoria Legal Aid and the Human Rights Law Centre. As well as casework, lawyers also assist with preparing media strategy, and drafting press releases. The critical role for lawyers in coronial inquests is to support the victim's family and provide a platform for them to be heard.

In addition to these matters, the less recognised victories are equally important: preventing the eviction of a family violence victim survivor from their home, contesting an unjustly issued infringement, or obtaining financial compensation for an unfair dismissal.

The work/life balance at VALS is generally reasonable compared with commercial practice, however the weeks leading up to and during trials and inquests are hectic and hours can be long.

Some of the challenges I face

As with many community justice organisations, there are significant challenges managing overwhelming need, limited resources, and vulnerable clients presenting with multiple complex needs, which can often impact upon a practitioners' mental health and wellbeing.

Despite this, the camaraderie of colleagues, the opportunity to learn from the Indigenous community and our clients' resilience and gratitude more than compensate.

Opportunities for law students

VALS is delighted to be working with MLS students through the clinic placement subject.

Additionally, VALS usually offers two volunteer intakes across all our legal practices twice per year – keep an eye out on the VALS website for application details

Finding a Path to Public Interest Law

Paul Goddard - JobWatch

With the beauty of hindsight, I can say for certain that there are three guiding principles that have helped me develop my career in public interest law. I share these principles in this article today, to help any young law student prepare for a similar career journey.

1. Find and pursue your passion.

For most law students, something has driven them to study law in the first place. Whether it's a passion for intellectual challenges, a passion for better understanding the governance of our society, a passion for protecting human rights or a passion for making an impact – there is a driving passion that spurs them on through many years of difficult studies.

As a law student, you need to actively recognise what your passion is, and harness it to drive your career forward. Being able to articulate this passion through a cohesive narrative about your goals and how they align with your prospective employers' goals will serve you well. Lawyers who are passionate about their work and purpose make the best lawyers.

For me, recognising that my passion was about 'giving back' has helped me to grow and develop my career in public interest law. I thank my father, also a lawyer, for setting this example for me. After he finished being a partner at a multi-national law firm for many years, he returned to volunteering through drop-in sessions at Fitzroy Legal Service to support those in the community who were less fortunate.

As such, I sought to complete my Practical Legal Training with the Consumer Law Action Centre (CALC), because I had some interest in consumer law, but I found my interest in employment law was stronger and I volunteered with both Fitzroy Legal Service and JobWatch to pursue my interest in employment law after I was admitted as a lawyer.

2. Say yes to opportunities, and actively seek them out.

Be brave – say yes. Take electives that you enjoy or find interesting during your degree. Put your hand up to volunteer. Open the door to new opportunities. If you have the capacity to take on volunteer work during your degree, I recommend applying to volunteer with a community legal centre. Unlike corporate or private practice, community legal centres will commonly work across multiple issues in law from criminal matters to consumer law, migration law, tenancy law, family law, employment law, and more.

By volunteering with a community legal centre with such a diverse practice, you get to experience and deepen your knowledge of a range of legal issues. You also have the opportunity to communicate with clients directly. Take the opportunity to talk to the lawyers working in these CLCs – understand their career choices, what they love and don't love about their work, and how they got to where they are. This in turn will help to guide your own career path.

3. Understand the other side.

A good lawyer can effectively understand the needs and situation of their client and support them with their legal issue. A great lawyer is one who can also understand the perspective of the other side and prepare their case and arguments accordingly.

Equipping yourself with better understanding of both sides of the issue is critical for anticipating all eventualities in a case. As such, after my extensive volunteer experience with community legal centres focusing on employment law, I chose to gain experience as a lawyer working on behalf of employers.

I accepted a role with Employsure's legal practice, Employsure Law, where I worked for 2.5 years, providing employers with representation and attending all hearings, preparing documentation and conducting negotiations on their behalf. This important experience has allowed me to better understand perspectives of both employers and employees, ultimately making me a better lawyer for my current clients at JobWatch.

Finally, finding your path back to public interest law can be a long and circuitous journey, or it can be quick and direct as the opportunity presents itself. After a series of interviews and conversations with a recruiter and with JobWatch's Executive Director, I was presented with the opportunity to return to JobWatch as a fully qualified and trained lawyer.

I already knew I would enjoy the work and the camaraderie of working at a community legal centre with similarly civic-minded lawyers who are passionate about access to justice. The decision to return was simple: I was 1) pursuing my passion for employment law and 2) saying yes to a new opportunity after 3) having garnered experience in understanding the other side. I wish all law students and graduates the very best in their careers, and I hope these three principles will stand you all in good stead.

Paul Goddard is a lawyer with JobWatch, an employment rights community legal centre that operates in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania. Find out more about JobWatch: www.jobwatch.org.au



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