



RMIT

Law Students' Society

JD Intro to Law Guide 2015

rmitlss.com

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Hello and welcome to the RMIT Juris Doctor program!

The first weekend of Intro to Law can be overwhelming. I remember my first weekend back in 2012.

I was filled with nervous energy, excited by the prospect of starting and daunted by the often incomprehensible vernacular spouted so quickly by these then unknown lecturers. Slowly but surely I deciphered their ancient script, googled a few Latin terms and ipso facto started to understand what was going on.

This guide is the amalgamation of helpful tips from those who've gone before you, survived and hopefully thrived. We also have some details on what the Law Student Society (LSS) is and what we do. Have a read and get involved.

The most rewarding part of my experience through the Juris Doctor has been my involvement in competitions. You meet people and get to work on the practical aspects of law. We have further information on this and other LSS activities in this guide.

Our society is here for the benefit of all JD students, if you would like to get involved please contact me on president@rmitlss.com or any of the committee, we'd love to have you.

Paul Melican

President & Treasurer RMIT LSS



Welcome to all new students in the RMIT Juris Doctor Program!

I'm Anthony Forsyth, JD Program Director and Coordinator of your first course: Introduction to the Australian Legal System and Legal Methods.

In 2015, the first weekend of this course is happening two weeks after the start of semester. So you will be hitting your classes in Contract, Torts and other first-year courses before you get a lot of the background you need in the introductory course.

To help you with this, we have made several videos which can be accessed on the Blackboard site for the introductory course. One video in particular tells you all you need to know about the course - how it covers the purposes of law, case law, legislation/statutory interpretation, the Australian Constitution and the vital skills you will learn in legal research and case law analysis.

Other videos in the series provide an overview of the JD Program, the fantastic opportunities (including placements and clinical legal practice) available through the Centre for Innovative Justice, and essential research tips from our law librarian Jenny Hurley.

You'll hear a lot more from me and the introductory course co-lecturer, Anne Kallies, at the first weekend of classes. In the meantime, I hope you settle into your JD studies well - and take the time to get involved in the LSS activities.

Professor Anthony Forsyth

RMIT Law Students' Society

Our purpose

The **RMIT Law Students' Society** (LSS) was established to engage the Juris Doctor (JD) student body through social activities and personal development opportunities. We aim to enhance the formal education by encouraging students to take part in activities outside of the program that help to establish new networks and create new perspectives on both traditional and non-traditional areas of law. Ultimately, we want to help students find their future path in law and become more employable when it's time to get your resume together.

Our aims and objectives

- Facilitate, encourage and promote the education of RMIT Juris Doctor students.
- Enhance employment opportunities for RMIT Juris Doctor students.
- Facilitate and encourage the participation of RMIT Juris Doctor students in relevant events and competitions.
- Encourage social interaction between RMIT Juris Doctor students.

Become a member

To **maximise your experience** during your JD studies become a member of the RMIT Law Students' Society. All currently enrolled RMIT JD students or alumni are eligible to become members.

Member benefits

- member pricing to all LSS events and offers
- be eligible to participate in LSS sponsored competitions and activities with the chance to win a trip to the yearly ALSA conference.
- access to all LSS publications.
- be eligible to nominate for LSS committee positions and to vote at general and special members meetings.

Membership process

Membership costs **\$20** for a year from when you join for RMIT University Student Union (RUSU) members and **\$40** for non RUSU members. RUSU membership is only **\$10** in 2015.

To become a member, firstly pay for your 2015 RUSU membership at www.su.rmit.edu.au and then go to www.rmitlss.com to pay for your LSS membership.

For membership queries please contact the RMIT LSS Vice President on vicepresident@rmitlss.com

Upcoming Events

March 5	RUSU City Clubs Day
March 13	JD Intro to Law Guide launch to first years in weekend 1
March 27	RMIT LSS AGM
April 19	Drinks on Sunday hosted by the LSS for first years weekend 2
April 23	JD/MBA Careers Event
May 15	Careers and Clerkships Guide launch event
June 26	End of exams mid year event
July 3-7	IMLAM, hosted by RMIT
November 13	End of year awards and drinks night

If you would like to support our events, please contact the Events Officer on events@rmitlss.com



RMIT
Law Students' Society

Get involved in the LSS Committee

Benefits of being involved

The best way to really get the most out of your time studying your JD and your LSS membership is to get actively involved in the LSS committee. You'll:

- have the privilege of helping shape the student experience and culture at RMIT Graduate School of Business and Law.
- help promote the JD and RMIT with the wider legal community.
- gain new skills and competencies that you can talk about in interviews such as preparing submissions for grants.
- meet new people and be a part of a team, and at the same time learning communication and interpersonal skills.
- learn all about event and budget management and receive free training to support those activities.
- gain experience working in a not for profit society run by a committee and understanding all the formalities involved, especially an AGM.

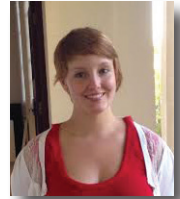
In addition, elected Executive Officers can have their efforts recognised on their Academic Transcripts and in official RMIT Certificates through the **RMIT LEAD Program** by signing up for and completing the RASCAL Program (RUSU-affiliated Societies and Clubs Accredited Leadership).

Current committee

The RMIT LSS Committee consists of Executive and Officer roles. The roles below may change from time to time depending on the activities during the year.



Danica Kustura
Vice President



Naomi Keessen
Executive Officer

Executive Officer roles

President	president@rmitlss.com
Treasurer	treasurer@rmitlss.com
Vice President	vicepresident@rmitlss.com
Executive Officer	executive@rmitlss.com
Secretary	secretary@rmitlss.com

General committee Officer roles

Competitions	competitions@rmitlss.com
Publications	publications@rmitlss.com
Events	events@rmitlss.com
Marketing	marketing@rmitlss.com
Equity	equity@rmitlss.com
IT	it@rmitlss.com

AGM

An annual general meeting (AGM) is held each year to elect the Executive committee. This year's AGM will be held on **Friday 27 March 2015 at 5:15pm (13.03.13)**. Refer to the RMIT LSS website for more details and how to nominate for a position.

Competitions and moots

Every year the RMIT Law Students' Society puts on an array of competitions to get our students involved and ready for a life outside of study! It doesn't matter if you want to be a solicitor, a barrister or an academic, we have something for you to try out, and hone your skills on.

In 2014 we had teams compete in the La Trobe Law Students' Association Maurice Blackburn Junior Moot, the ILA Public International Law Moot, the inaugural Australian and New Zealand Air Law Moot competition, King & Wood Mallesons Championship Moot, Kirby Moot, Castan Human Rights Moot and the ALSA Norton Rose Fulbright Client Interview Competition.

We also hosted the second and third annual College of Law Client Interview Competition, and the RMIT LSS Invitational Moot series; comprising of the Maurice Blackburn Contract Moot, and the Nowicki Carbone Personal Injury Moot.

UNSW Private Law Moot

The first and only national mooting competition with private law as its subject area. Held in Sydney during April. If private law is your thing, let us know!

Commitment level: **High**

Preparation time: 30-40 hours. You will need to write a submission and practice with your team
Competition time: 3 days in Syd (plus travel)
Applicable Career: Barrister and advocate

Essay Competitions

Did you write a kick-arse paper for Contract Law and now don't know what to do with it? Want some serious bragging rights and the chance to compete with it nationally? Then enter it in the RMIT LSS Inaugural Essay Competition. Students are encouraged to

submit an academic paper between 3,000 and 12,000 words on ANY legal issue. Your paper needs to have been graded at 70% or above. The top 3 papers will be submitted to ALSA's National Essay Competition and this competition is open to all RMIT JD students.

Commitment Level: **Low**

Preparation: None! You have already done it!

Competition time: None!

Applicable career: Written communication is key in every area of the legal sector!

LaTrobe Witness Examination Competition

In this competition, you get to make your dreams come true and play the role of a barrister. You must establish or disprove a particular charge or fact situation for your client. This is a great competition for those who want to head to the Bar after study, or just fun for those who want to try out their Harvey Specter style cross-examination. This will be the first year RMIT is entering this competition and we will provide more details on our website when it becomes available.

Commitment level: **Medium**

Preparation time: At this stage we think maybe 1 -2 days. More details to follow!

Competition time: 1 day

Applicable Career: Barrister and advocate

RMIT Invitational Moot Series

A moot like no other! Moot on our home soil, at the Old Melbourne Magistrate Court and test out your skills on other law schools from Melbourne.

Commitment level: **Medium**

Preparation time: 3 – 4 days. You will need to write a submission and practice with your team

Competition time: ½ - 1 full day

Applicable Career: Barrister and advocate

Australia Law Students' Association (ALSA) Conference Competitions

Held in Sydney this year, the ALSA Conference is a great chance to represent RMIT in competitions. In previous years we have sent mooting and client interview teams. This year we are hoping to repeat that experience and send some academic papers as well (without their writers).

If selected, the LSS will fund your registration into the Conference and the competition. This includes your accommodation, social activities and entry to the closing night Ball. It is a chance to meet students from across the country and even some international students. In order to be considered for a place on the ALSA team, you have to have competed in a Semester 1 competition.

Commitment level: **High**

Preparation time: 3 – 4 days for mooters, client interview is less, as is the essay competition

Competition time: 1 week in Sydney, 6-12 July

Applicable Career: solicitor, advocate, academic etc

Moot training and skills workshops

Are you completely new to this and have no idea what a moot is, but think it might be fun? Have you mooted before but want to work on your skills? Does the mere idea of the Civil and Evidence moots keep you up at night?

This year, for the first time, the LSS is offering Moot Training and Skills Workshops run once a fortnight in a casual atmosphere. You will have the chance to really hone those public speaking and quick thinking skills! We intend to start in March, so watch this space!

If you would like to be involved in the competitions, get in touch with our Competitions Officer on competitions@rmitlss.com, or fill out your expression of interest on our website rmitlss.com. Please be aware that dates can change and new competitions may be added during the year so please take responsibility for ensuring you have the latest dates.

2015 Competitions calendar

2 March to 30 April	Essay Competition	Melbourne, RMIT
April	Client Interview Competition	Melbourne, RMIT
April 10-12	UNSW Private Law Moot	Syd, UNSW
End of April	LaTrobe Witness Examination Competition	
May	RMIT Invitational Moot Series	Melb, RMIT
June	Paper Presentation Competition, First Year Moot	
July 3-7	IMLAM (International Maritime Law Arbitration Moot) hosted by RMIT and Murdoch University	Melb, RMIT
July 6-12	Australian Law Students' Association (ALSA) Conference including the Championship Moot	Syd, Uni of Sydney
September 2	Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) Moot	Melb, AAT
September 2	Castan Human Rights Moot	Clay Monash Uni
Late September	Kirby Contract Law Moot	Melb, Vic University

First semester client interview competition



All new students should seriously consider taking part in the first semester RMIT LSS Client Interview competition. If you are considering a career as a solicitor we suggest you give our Client Interview competition a try! It will help you understand what it is like to talk to a real live client. It's probably the least time consuming competition we can possibly offer!

For 20 minutes you pretend to be a solicitor and interview a client who is new to your firm. You are effectively the face of your pretend firm, and need to learn about your client and their problem in order to give them some solid advice. This is perfect for students who are new to a law degree and want to get involved as it requires minimum commitment and helps build up your communication skills!

Commitment Level: **Low**
Preparation: minimum – just re-read your notes from the applicable subject
Competition time: 30mins
Applicable career: Solicitor or paralegal

Why participate so early?

The winners of this competition have a chance of being selected for the **ALSA Conference in Sydney in July**. Get some experience early!

How to prepare?

Read the article on the next page 'How to conduct an effective client interview'. Start practicing with your fellow students. Ask others who have done it what their learnings have been.

How to enter

Submit your expression of interest on the RMIT LSS website rmitlss.com or email the Competitions Officer at competitions@rmitlss.com

How to conduct an effective client interview

As part of the JD you may need to undertake simulated client interviews as part of assessment. Nancy Chen outlines some tips on how to make sure you are as successful as possible.

Clients want to deal with someone they trust and like, so it is important for you to conduct the initial interview to the best of your ability. I don't have great memories of my first client interviews. As a legal trainee I interviewed clients on my own as my principal at the time was a strong believer in learning by swimming in the deep end!

Needless to say, it was a steep learning curve. Interviewing clients is a skill that improves with practice and experience. No doubt I'll continue to learn throughout my time in practice, but these are some of the best tips I've learnt to date:

Before the interview Plan your interview. Some knowledge of the background and issue will help, so ask your client for a brief summary before the interview. You will both feel more at ease at the interview if you have prepared. You and your firm should appear professional to your client. An unkempt appearance or an untidy meeting room is not only distracting, but can also give your client the impression that you aren't very professional or organised. Be punctual if the meeting is not at your office.

During the interview Your client might be anxious, particularly if they aren't familiar with the legal system. Introduce yourself with a smile so they feel welcome. Build rapport by engaging in small talk. Once everyone is seated and settled, let your client know the structure of interview and that you'll be making notes so they know what to expect.

Invite them to tell you their story or concerns, preferably in chronological order. Often they just need a listening ear. Steer the interview by listening actively. Focus on specific areas that are relevant. Your client doesn't necessarily know what is relevant but you do! Avoid legal jargon, be respectful and maintain a balanced amount of eye contact. You should appear calm and collected, even if you feel stressed or nervous (particularly if it's your first client interview).

Sum up the interview and outline steps going forward. Depending on your technical skills and experience you might be able to give a preliminary view. But if in doubt, explain to your client that you need to consider the matter carefully before you can form a view. Whatever you do, do not give legal advice without proper consideration – this is negligent! Discuss legal fees (if applicable) and leave time for questions. Finally, walk your client to the exit and thank them. Remember not to take things personally. If you have a rude, pushy or condescending client it's important to stay calm and remain professional. Also consider reporting it to your supervisor.

After the interview Make a detailed file note while it is fresh in your mind. Diarise any follow ups and deadlines. Discuss any concerns with your colleagues/supervisor. Once approved by your supervisor, send your advice (and any costs disclosure documents) to your client. Call them to let them know you've sent it.

Nancy Chen, LIV Young Lawyers

This article first appeared on the LIV Young Lawyers Blog in November 2012 and reproduced with the permission of the LIV. Visit livyounglawyers.asn.au

The Centre for Innovative Justice

The **Centre for Innovative Justice** (CIJ) was opened by the former Prime Minister Julia Gillard in March 2013 with former Victorian Attorney-General and Deputy Premier Rob Hulls as its inaugural Director. The mission of the CIJ is to research, develop, teach and promote innovative ways of delivering justice.

Student involvement with the Centre

The CIJ provides RMIT students, through placements and research opportunities, with practical exposure to the process of law reform and an understanding of the social context of the law, equipping them to use their legal training to advocate for and achieve change. Getting involved with the Centre is a great way for students to learn more about our key focus areas, including therapeutic and restorative justice, non-adversarial dispute resolution and access to justice, to name a few.

How to get involved

The Centre has a strong focus on developing opportunities for student learning and engagement, both within and outside the Juris Doctor curriculum. Simply contact us with your CV and some details about your areas of interest.

Clinical Legal Education with the Mental Health Legal Centre (MHLC)

The CIJ has formed a strategic partnership with **MHLC** which is also co-located in the Centre's premises on the RMIT campus. MHLC is an independent community legal centre specialising in providing legal advice and assistance to people with mental illness.

Legal Research Project placements

Through its extensive network of contacts and relationships across the legal system, the CIJ

assists students undertaking **Legal Research Project** to find placements in various justice system agencies. This course will enable students to begin to think seriously about their future legal careers, and think more broadly about the law and legal problems. During these placements, students undertake a research project on a matter of interest or concern to the host agency and attempt to develop advice or responses to tackle real problems.

Ad hoc opportunities

The CIJ develops a range of interesting opportunities for students to gain experience and undertake learning outside the curriculum. These opportunities to date have included:

- a student went to the High Court to work on an appeal as part of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre legal team;
- a student shadowed the Chief Judge of the County Court for a week;
- a student assisted a barrister during a sex offences trial in the County Court;
- a student worked for a week with the Koori Court Magistrate; and
- 15 students went to the Court of Appeal to discuss appeal hearings and review submissions, as well as attend a networking lunch with young legal professionals.

Centre for Innovative Justice International Study Tour Elective

JD students have the opportunity to enrol in an international study tour as an elective to be run in Semester 2, 2015 exploring international developments in innovative justice and court innovation. The study tour will involve a trip to **Auckland, New Zealand**, between **29 June and 3 July 2015**. The itinerary will include observations of a number of courts and discussions with presiding judges associated with Rangatahi youth court, drug and alcohol court and mental health court.

Contact CIJ

If you are interested in becoming involved in the Centre's activities, or would like to find out more, please contact us. Centre for Innovative Justice, RMIT University, Building 98 on +61 3 9925 1189 or email cij@rmit.edu.au
rmit.edu.au/innovativejustice
twitter.com/InnovateJustice



Australian Law Students' Association (ALSA)

The Australian Law Students' Association (ALSA) is a national not-for-profit association comprising all Law Student Societies and Law Student Associations, representing approximately 28,000 law students.



The core functions of ALSA are:

- To advocate the interests and concerns of Australian law students;
- To gather and disseminate information of interest and concern to Australian law students;
- To facilitate communication and the exchange of information between law student societies, within Australia and abroad; and
- To initiate activities of a social, intellectual, and competitive nature among law students at a national level.

FREE Membership

As an Australian law student, you are automatically a member of ALSA. From publications to scholarships, ALSA is your

national representative body for your law school experience. Our RMIT LSS President and Treasurer, Paul Melican is also the Vice President (Finance) for ALSA which provides a great networking benefit. If you have any questions about ALSA, please contact Paul on president@rmitlss.com.

ALSA Annual Conference 6-12 July

The ALSA Conference is one of the biggest events on the law student calendar. In 2015 the conference (and its several hundred law student attendees) are heading to Sydney from 6-12 July.

In addition to the national mooting, client interviewing, negotiation, witness examination and paper presentation competitions, students can expect a range of legal forums, skills workshops, day trips, an equity high tea and social events, such as gala dinners, a pub crawl, a cocktail party and a theme night.

If you can make it or just happen to be in Sydney during this time, it's worthwhile attending some or all of the events. For more information and to get involved, browse the website alsa.net.au as well as their Facebook page.

Law Institute of Victoria (LIV)

The **Law Institute of Victoria (LIV)** is the state's peak body for lawyers and those who work with them in the legal sector. The LIV leads and shapes debate on legal issues affecting the profession and the community.

As the leader of the legal profession in Victoria, the LIV offers 150 years of experience and expertise to help you throughout your studies and your legal career.

LIV FREE student membership

LIV membership is your gateway to expert resources, information, education, support services and professional networks, all designed to support and develop your career. Become a LIV student member for free today. Simple go to their website liv.asn.au or email membership@liv.asn.au

LIV Young Lawyers Section

The Young Lawyers Section (YLS) is a dynamic group established to enhance the legal

skills, knowledge and professional networks of members in the early stages of career development. When you're just starting out, LIV Young Lawyers can support you as you build your legal career. Membership is free to eligible LIV members. Visit LIVyounglawyers.asn.au

LIV YLS Later Lawyers

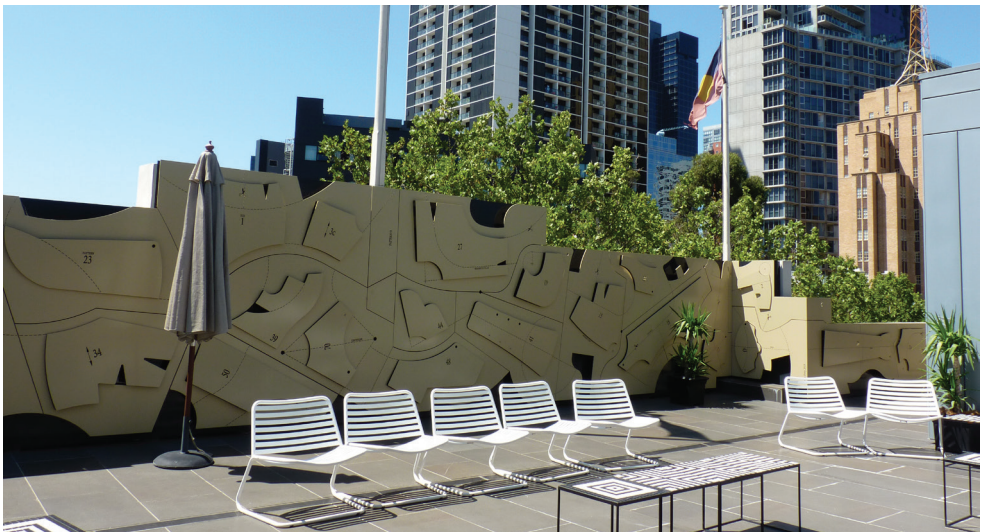
LIV YLS Later Lawyers networking committee organises social and networking events and is specifically targeted at later lawyers.

Events & Networking

Develop professional networks and increase your knowledge by attending the many events and educational activities held throughout the year. For the full list of activities visit liv.asn.au/whatsOncalendar



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How to maximise your time at law school

Summer is starting to wind down which can only mean one thing; law school is back in session. Law school can be very intimidating. There usually isn't a settling in period; when it's on, it's on. Law school is certainly difficult but it doesn't have to be miserable! You'll have a better time if you take advantage of all the extra things it has to offer.

I had a roundabout path into law. I completed a BA at La Trobe University and then a JD at RMIT. The first half of my JD was all done online. I had no contact with any of my fellow students, I didn't even see a university building until I got to second year which made studying law very lonely. I eventually transferred to studying on campus because I needed the interaction with other students. From then on, law school was an absolute blast. Well, at least it was much more interesting. Here are a couple of quick tips that you should consider to maximise your time at law school.

Join your LSS All law schools have a law students' society. The LSS is a great way to meet fellow law students and get involved in the life of your law school by taking part in competitions, seminars, study groups and student tutorials. LSS' have strong connections to the legal profession so they're also a good way to broaden your legal interests and network with legal practitioners.

Join the Law Institute of Victoria This is an absolute no brainer. The LIV is the leader of the legal profession in Victoria. It is 150 years old and growing. With over 15,000 members, a lot of whom are students themselves, you can really benefit from that sort of strength in numbers. The LIV organises fantastic events for law students and student, membership is free. They also have a variety of interest areas and

committees that you can get involved in and provide helpful resources and information for students. See, total no brainer!

Moot At RMIT we had compulsory mooting, it was absolutely terrifying but also very rewarding. Not only do you hone your advocacy skills but your legal drafting and research skills are tested with every single question from the bench.

Go on exchange Most universities offer some sort of exchange program. I had the opportunity to go on exchange and be placed with an NGO in Vietnam for two weeks. Not only did I get to experience another culture, I learnt more in those two weeks than I would have in two years.

Volunteer As law students our skills in research, advocacy, team work and analysis are in high demand, particularly in NGO's and community legal centres. If you've ever considered volunteering and are able to, now is your time. Volunteering is the best way to expand your networks and get some real-life exposure to real-life clients. You'll also have a much better grasp of how the law applies in the real world, which isn't always so obvious when you're at law school.

Studying law is like learning a language, you could do it on your own but it's not as much fun or nearly as rewarding. By getting involved in extracurricular activities you'll expand your network, build your skills and law school will be a lot more meaningful, which in turn will make you a better lawyer.

David Mejia-Canales
RMIT LSS Past President 2012 & Alumni

10 tips for a brilliant law school experience

1 Accept that you may not be a law wunderkind straight away Although things might have come to you easily in high school or your previous degree (think A+ or HD marks for little work), the transition into law can take a while. It can take some time to get used to the workload (I'm looking at you, constitutional law readings) and the bamboozling legalese (law talk), and to work out how the jumble of statutes and case law fits together. While some new law students will be instant law wizards, don't be hard on yourself if you don't score a clean sweep of High Distinctions in your first law subjects. Be patient, keep studying, and know that at some stage it will all 'click' for you.

2 Be consistently consistent Every student advice article has to have a boring bit about being organised, so this is ours. Going to class and making time to do the readings and write up notes each week will save your brain a lot of cramming pain at exam time. Also, it's a bad idea to start studying property law on the morning of the final exam.

3 Keep it interesting Sometimes the law can be dry, dry, dry. Wherever you can, try to mix up your study routine to help make the dull parts more bearable: use flashcards, write songs about your cases, spot the legal ethics issues in *Rake*, study in the park, bribe yourself with lollies. Whatever works.

4 Be realistic about your workload Remember that you have more on than just your degree: there's work, social commitments, extra-curricular activities, sleeping, eating, etc. It's okay to say no to things when you can't fit them in, and it's not the worst thing in the world if you need to reduce your study load and extend your degree. Even law students need to sleep sometimes. True story!

5 Make time for calligraphy classes abseiling/clarinet lessons Law is not a hobby. Mooting, as awesome as it is, is also not a hobby. A law degree can have this pesky habit of taking over your life, so it's critical to have something in your life that's completely outside the law. Whether it's flower arranging or archaeology or marathon running, make time for the hobbies you love because they'll help to keep you sane when you have four assignments due in the same week.

6 Take care of yourself Restricting your sleep time to your daily commute or only eating foods that can be prepared in under two minutes may seem like a clever way to maximise your study time, but it'll just make it trickier to focus.

7 Don't go it alone Law school may seem like a competitive, lone wolf kind of environment, but the reality is that nobody makes it through a law degree on their own. A good support network of friends and family to proofread your assignments, hear your law school rants, share notes, lend you their printer, or drive you to the exam you're late for makes all the difference. Depression, anxiety and stress are common among law students – look out for your friends and don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

8 Keep an open mind about your legal career You may have started your law degree with the intention of becoming a high-flying Denny Crane, a champion of human rights or a hot-shot criminal lawyer, but expect your career aspirations to change as you're exposed to more opportunities. A law degree can take you lots of places so learn about as many career avenues as you can and be open to changing your mind. If you decide that you don't want to be a lawyer, that's okay too.

9 Remember why you enrolled in law

A passion for social justice or a burning interest in a particular area of the law is often what draws students to law school. The only hitch is that a two- hour property law lecture can make it hard to remember that you initially came to law school because you love media law. Whether it's finding related work experience, listening to fascinating guest speakers at your university, volunteering with a community legal centre, or reading books that inspire you about the law, do what you can to maintain that excitement and use it as motivation.

10 Enjoy it! Law school isn't just about getting great marks and setting yourself

up for a good graduate job. It's also about making friends, trying new things, going on exchange, picking up a few new skills, doing internships, etc. Don't spend your law entire degree in the library, and make the most of the opportunities that come your way.

This article was provided by **Survive Law**. Survive Law is an online community for Australian law students. Check out **survivelaw.com** for more careers tips, study advice and general law school shenanigans.

The logo for 'Survive Law' features the word 'Survive' in a red, serif font and 'Law' in a black, serif font, both in a stylized, slightly overlapping arrangement.

Useful RMIT services and resources

Student Wellbeing Services

RMIT offers many Student Wellbeing services and has offices at the City, Brunswick and Bundoora West campuses. They offer support and assistance when you need it.

Counselling - provides professional counseling to talk about personal, study, mental and wellbeing issues and is free to all currently enrolled RMIT students.

Health – services to help you stay healthy during your studies.

Chaplaincy - helps students and staff connect their educational experience with spiritual support for students of all faiths and none.

Childcare - RMIT runs the City Campus Children's Centre which has a strong commitment to providing a progressive children's service.

Disability Liaison Unit – provides a range of services to assist students living with a disability, long term illness and/or mental health condition to assist them undertake

their chosen field of study.

Finance - get a range of financial information to assist you during your studies at RMIT.

Accommodation – Student Wellbeing offers practical help, advice and support through Student Wellbeing Advisors.

Legal - free and confidential legal advice to currently enrolled RMIT students.

Visit the RMIT University website for more details and information on how to contact Student Wellbeing Advisors.

IT Services

RMIT offers a wide range of information technologies (IT) to support your learning experience and help you engage with the University community.

Computer access - all students can take advantage of student computer labs, some of which are open 24/7. Building 13 has its own IT Hub (13.03.01).

Useful RMIT services and resources

Wireless - Wherever you are on campus, you can connect to RMIT's fast Wi-Fi. There are two networks: RMIT-University (closed secure access) and RMIT-Support (open access).

Printing – just go to a printer on campus and swipe your student card to register. Top up your credit as you need it. There is a printer conveniently located in Building 13 in the IT Hub.

myRMIT - the portal for current RMIT students.

myDesktop - you can access your RMIT desktop and applications from home or wherever you have an internet connection.

Google Apps - Store your work in the cloud and collaborate with peers with a suite of communication and collaboration tools.

Study Resources

Improve your academic skills, gain knowledge and do better in your program by being aware of RMIT's study resources.

Library - offers extensive services, facilities and study space. There are comprehensive collections of books, periodicals (print and online) and other course-related materials, such as videos, magazines, computer software, tapes, slides, films, newspapers and maps.

- **LibrarySearch** - The Library has a search engine called LibrarySearch. Use it to begin searching on a general topic.
- **Library subject guides** - are like mini-websites on searching for useful information – and there's one created for [Legal Research Methods](#) and [Justice](#) which are invaluable for your JD studies. Take some time to check this out.
- **Liaison Librarians** are there to help you. The Legal Research Methods library subject guide is kept up to date by Librarian Jenny

Hurley and is available for consultation by appointment (jennifer.hurley@rmit.edu.au)

- **CAVAL Borrowing** - Reciprocal Borrowing Program allows RMIT students to borrow material from other participating Victorian academic libraries. Just go to your local RMIT Library to obtain your CAVAL card.
- **Other support services** include endnote beginner classes, referencing support, planning your assignments, research services and copyright advice.

Study and Learning Centre - Improve your study skills with a range of online tutorials and face-to-face support:

- Drop-in learning centres
- Study KnowHow workshops (such as workshops, academic writing and study skills and postgraduate academic skills)
- Learning Lab
- Postgraduate learning support

Study spaces and meeting points - find a quiet place to study or to talk through your assignments.

- Building 13 IT Hub (13.03.01) or Student Lounge (13.02.24).
- Group study rooms in all libraries can be booked by students up to 2 weeks in advance through the Library's online Book It system.
- Building 80 student portals and meeting spaces.
- Swanston and Carlton Library.

Lockers – Building 13 offers locker access on level 2.

This information was sourced from the RMIT University website. For the most up to date information check the website. Information provided is intended as a guide only.

Food and coffee around RMIT

Week Nights

Emily's Café (Located in RMIT Building 13, Student Lounge) It's supposed to be open from M-Th 8.30am to 8pm and F 8.30am to 4pm. A good option when you don't want to leave the building, although be prepared to pay for it and wait for it! Fair warning, the hours are not something you can depend on.

7-Eleven (23-29 Victoria St, Melbourne, straight up Mackenzie street) Average but cheap coffee (\$1 small, \$2 medium) and snacks, drinks etc. While this doesn't sound like a great option, sometimes it's better than nothing!

Convenience Store (37 Mackenzie St, Melbourne) Cheaper snacks and drinks than 7-Eleven. Stocks a large range of Asian snacks such as Pocky and instant ramen bowls.

Corner of Victoria and Lygon Streets A range of options, including a sandwich bar, a convenience store and a Chinese restaurant that also sells Sushi!

For Days Spent in the library

I don't like to admit it, but sometimes you just have to spend at day in a quiet room at uni, getting work done. For those days, we suggest The **Orr Street Café** (Orr Street, Melbourne). Amazing coffee at reasonable prices, with amazing looking cakes! Worth it for that quick study break and maybe even some textbook reading in the fresh air. Plus it's a 2 minute walk!

Weekends

If you have weekend intensive classes there is usually a long enough lunch break to go a little bit further! Remember this is Melbourne, the food capital of Australia...so we had to keep the list very short!

Melbourne Central Food Court A typical shopping centre food court with all the basics, including Sushi, McDonalds, Schintz and cupcakes.

Mr Tulk Café (328 Swanston St Melbourne) Amazing coffee and pretty good sweets. There will most likely be a slight wait, but trust us, it's worth it!

Lygon Street Just up the road, has a wide range of restaurants just waiting for you! Your options include Italian, French, Thai and Greek just to name a few! Enjoy!

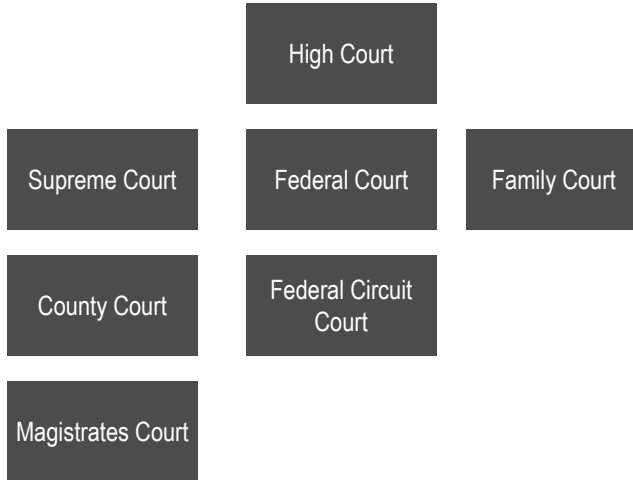


Feeling a little poor?

There is a microwave in the Student Lounge on level 2 of Building 13. If you are a tea drinker/can tolerate instant coffee there is a continuous flow of boiling water on level 4. Cold water is available on levels 2 and 4. If you're a Student Union member, you'll be happy to know that they offer free breakfast and BBQ's on occasion. Visit su.rmit.edu.au for more details.

Naomi Keessen
RMIT LSS Executive Officer

Structure of the main courts of Australia



Magistrates Court

The front line of the court system and are integral to the overall maintenance of the judicial system. Apart from conducting hearings within their jurisdiction, they also issue warrants for arrest, remand, search, property seizure, imprisonment, youth detention and infringement. The original criminal jurisdiction includes all summary offences and some indictable offences. The penalties applicable in the Magistrates court are limited so more serious crimes are taken to higher courts. The court may also hear civil matters up to \$100,000, with the exception of TAC claims which are unlimited in value.

Important: The Magistrates Court is a court of summary and defendants in criminal proceedings have a right to have their case heard on a de novo basis which means for the first time without regard to the Lower court's decision.

County Court

Has the jurisdiction for all matters that are not specifically excluded from the court's ability to

hear them. Virtually all criminal matters other than murder and treason, and all civil matters are heard here provided they have sufficient expertise.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court of Victoria has two divisions; The Trial Division and the Court of Appeal. The trial division sits with one judge and Court of Appeal usually with three Judges. Five judges may be used where there is an appeal to reconsider a previous judgement of the Court of Appeal. The Supreme Court hears murder cases, complicated civil matters and appeals from the County Court.

Federal Court

The Federal Court was created in 1976; it is a superior court of records and sits in all capital cities and elsewhere in Australia. It replaced the Australian Industrial Court and the Federal Court of Bankruptcy but with an expanded jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of the Federal Court is provided in the specific acts passed by parliament rather than through an

overarching principle as with the main other courts listed in this summary. In this sense it is an opt-in process that is created by the legislation, rather than an opt-out as is the case with the Victorian County Court.

The Federal Circuit Court of Australia

Formerly known as the Federal Magistrates Court. The court does not deal with criminal matters. The FCC shares its jurisdiction with both the Federal Court and the Family Court. It was created under the The Federal Circuit Court of Australia Act 1999 (Cth) making it the newest court in Australia at only 16 years old.

The FCC is a court of record making. It is distinctly different from the Victorian Magistrates Court which is a court of summary. The key difference is that appeals from the FCC are not new decisions (de novo) but rather appeals.

Family Court

The Family Court was created and governed by the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth). It is a superior court of record and deals with appeals from the Federal Circuit Court and matters that are particularly complex in the first instance.

High Court

The High Court is the highest court in the land created under s71 of the Australian

Constitution. The High Court is a Federal Court but also hears appeals from the State Supreme courts. In this way it is the only court that operates in both the state based and federal hierarchies.

Original Jurisdiction

Any matter arising under treaty, affecting representatives of other countries, in which the Commonwealth or its representative is a party, a dispute between the states or residents of two different states, a writ of Mandamus or prohibition or an injunction sought against an officer of the Commonwealth. Refer s75 & s76 of the Australian Constitution.

Appellate Jurisdiction

The High Court may hear appeals from the original jurisdiction of the High Court, any other Federal Court or Supreme Court of any State. The judgments of the High Court are final, however there are procedures for an appeal to be sent to the Queen in Council (The Privy Council) but the High Court has specifically stated it will never grant the leave required for such an appeal.

Koori Court

Many of these courts have Koori divisions for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The use of these divisions are optional and they are less formal.

Paul Melican

President and Treasurer RMIT LSS



Free online legal research tools

Finding case law

Austlii (austlii.edu.au)

Access to case law from most superior Australian courts and tribunals, as well as current and past Federal, State and Territory legislation.

Jade (<http://jade.barnet.com.au>)

Free subscription service for searching, annotating and sharing Australian legal judgments and decisions. Delivers tailored results to your inbox daily of the latest superior court decisions (a favourite of some leading barristers I know).

Finding legislation

ComLaw (comlaw.gov.au)

The Attorney-General's Department site for Commonwealth materials is the most up-to-date, authoritative resource for Commonwealth legislation.

Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Document (legislation.vic.gov.au)

Contains search options for Victorian Acts, Statutes, Rules, Bills under consideration and Victorian Hansard.

Lawlex (my.lawlex.com.au)

An interface to legislative information online.

Legal citation

Monash Legal Abbreviations (<http://guides.lib.monash.edu/legal-abbreviations>)

Monash University website contains both Australian and international abbreviations for citations of case law.

Melbourne University Guide to Legal Citation (law.unimelb.edu.au/mulr/aglc)

A comprehensive guide to legal writing which clarifies Australian citation customs and best practice.

Finding journals and articles

LIV Library (liv.asn.au/Library)

Locate Law Institute Journal ("LIJ") articles on the LIV library catalogue. As a LIV member the first 5 articles from the collection are free. You may also access the HeinOnline & AGIS databases to locate journal articles. With extensive experience in legal research, library staff have the expertise to ensure that LIV members have the resources they need to achieve the best outcome for their clients.

To see which new articles have been indexed by the library from an array of journals, read the 'In Reference' page in the LIJ each month.

Lawyers Weekly (lawyersweekly.com.au)

@LawyersWeekly on Twitter provides news, analysis and opinion about the business of law.

Social Media - the fastest way to get the latest news. The online legal research landscape is constantly evolving. In addition to the resources listed above, social media is fast becoming a great way to stay in front with the latest news and law reform in Victoria, Australia and the world. Join the LIV Young Lawyers Facebook page at [facebook.com/LIVYoungLawyers](https://www.facebook.com/LIVYoungLawyers) for articles, reform updates, forums and other upcoming events for new lawyers (both legal and not-so-legal).

Nick Cooper, LIV YLS Social Committee Co-chair. This article first appeared on the LIV Young Lawyers Blog in June 2012 and reproduced with the permission of the LIV. Visit livyounglawyers.asn.au

A note on taking notes

As a postgraduate student you're probably not a stranger to taking notes in lectures and tutorials. Making sure that you have the best notes possible in law school will be crucial to your exam success.

Most exams at law school are open book exams which makes them just that little bit harder as not only do you have to take the best material in to the exam room, to make sure that anything you take in is useful you need to have actually read it. If you have really well structured notes that you can understand and navigate easily you won't need to take much else with you in to the exam room.

There really isn't a template to taking law school notes at all; however these tips should help you get in to good habits early on.

Handwriting notes just won't do

While handwritten law notes have a certain romantic air about them, they really just won't do. Using a computer to type your notes allows you to make quick edits not only in class but afterwards; typing your notes gives you more options to arrange your notes such as allowing you to colour code, modify and stylise your notes as you wish. Always make sure you back them up too. If you lose handwritten notes they're gone forever, not necessarily so with typed notes.

Choose a template early and stick to it

Some people colour code their notes, some people cut and paste cases and legislation directly into their notes, some people note them down separately, others develop meticulously designed notes. There is no right way of doing it. The best way of taking your notes is in a way that you will understand

and if you're consistent across subjects you won't have any trouble finding your content in exams regardless of subject.

Your notes are a work in progress

The notes you take in class will need to be edited during and after the lecture. The notes you take in class aren't definitive, to make them more useful to you go back and edit them, add to them and use them as a study tool often. It's too late to walk in to the exam just to realise that the supposedly fantastic notes you think you had aren't really very useful.

Sharing isn't always caring

It won't take you too long to realise that there are countless notes circling around law school from the ghosts of students past. Before you do rely on these in lieu of your own ensure that the notes are not outdated, law changes often. You'll likely fail if you rely on someone's notes for Consumer Law that were written when the Trade Practices Act was in place if the Australian Consumer Law is what you actually need.

Lend or not to lend, that is the question

If you keep really good notes you'll probably find that many students who may not be as diligent as you and will want to borrow your notes. It's up to you to lend or not lend your notes but be mindful that you do not want to put yourself at risk of plagiarism. Not only is plagiarism the worst offence you can commit at a university, if you want to practice as a lawyer you need to provide a statement of academic conduct to the Board of Examiners and even the mere act of being investigated for plagiarism can prejudice your chance at becoming admitted as a lawyer, it's just not worth the risk.

How to write a memo of advice

During your time at law school you will be asked to write numerous memoranda of advice. Which is all well and good provided you know what a memorandum of advice is! Basically a memorandum is used by lawyers to analyse a legal problem and provide legal advice to clients.

A memorandum is usually an internal document used in litigation between lawyers in the same firm or between lawyer and client and not given to the other side. There is no set template for a memorandum of advice at law school, ask your lecturer if she or he has a template they prefer or if you're free to use your own. Developing your own template early on will really help you when you are asked to draft a memo as you will already have a backbone to start from. Template or not, all memoranda have to have these crucial elements:

Identify the legal issue or legal question that you are writing the memorandum about

This is your starting point. What is the issue you are being asked to give advice on? Pay careful attention here, if you do not really identify the correct legal question or issue you are to examine your memorandum of advice will be useless. At law school you will probably be given a question to investigate in a memorandum of advice and this will usually be the legal issue you are to examine. My advice, write this at the very top of your memo so that you do not veer off into other directions or into other issues you are not being asked to investigate.

Outline the facts

What are the facts in the problem or issue you are being asked to write the memorandum about? At law school you will usually be given a set the facts of the issue, but be careful, you may not get all the facts given to you and to get to the best answer or solution you can you might need to either find out some facts by interviewing your client or by asking your lecturer or you may need to assume some parts of the facts. You need to outline clearly what the facts are that you will be relying on and also outline any facts that you feel are missing or you may need to assume.

Make sure you read, re read and really understand the facts in the case or issue you are writing the memo about; something so seemingly trivial such as not paying attention to the dates outlined in the facts can completely derail your memo before you even start.

What is the law that applies?

Now that you are completely across the issue or question you are going to investigate and completely understand the facts you need to find out what relevant case law applies. This is the body of your memo and also probably the trickiest part. You have to match the facts, with the law and come up with a solution based on your understanding of the case law.

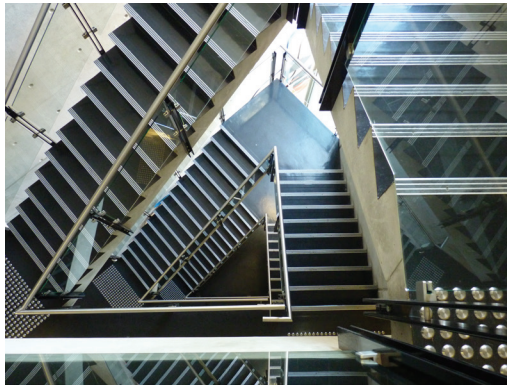
This step not only involves finding cases that are helpful and support your reasoning and understanding of the facts but you also need to explore cases that may harm or go against your case and either refute them or explain how those cases may impact the final outcome of the case.

Be patient with yourself here, and ask for further help from your lecturer if you need it.

This is what the whole memorandum exercise is about, finding out how you take a set of facts and apply them to the applicable law to reach an outcome. The final outcome is not always clear cut and can sometimes be difficult to draw out even if you have a very understanding of the case law, particularly if the facts you have been given don't fit neatly into categories.

When starting out a common mistake is to just state the relevant applicable law and to state the facts and end the memorandum there. While you may earn points for stating the relevant law that applies to your problem you will have failed in the ultimate task of finding a solution to the issue.

It may seem daunting at first to apply the law to a set of facts, but you really need to dive right in and give it a try, it's the whole point of law school, to teach you to learn to solve problems like a lawyer.



Conclusion

Once you've applied the law to the facts and essentially given your advice to a potential fake client or fellow lawyer you need to conclude your memo by briefly summarising the main points above and ending the advice with, well... advise. Your conclusion should identify whether the case you have been presented is viable or if it has no merit or what the implications of proceeding with this case would be for a client. It goes without saying that your advice has been reached after careful consideration of all the points above.

Some more tips:

Understand what you have to do! This seems

really straight forward but can be easy to overlook. Are you being asked to advise a client, are you being asked to advise a client on a particular cause of action, are you being asked to advise another lawyer on the possibilities of success of the case at hand? Depending on the task you have been set you will need to modify your answer and maybe your language accordingly. For example, if you are advising a client you can safely assume they do not understand the law as well as you do so you may have to outline basic legal principles in your memo. If you are being asked to advise a fellow lawyer you may not need to do this.

Plan your answer, there's nothing worse than sitting in front of your computer to begin writing a memo just to stare at a blank page for half an hour. A plan gives your memo structure and also keeps you on task.

Write clearly, check your spelling, syntax, punctuation and avoid using latin terms and overly complicated jargon. It doesn't make you look more intelligent, in fact it requires a lot more skill to explain what *expressio unius est exclusio alterius* means in plain English than just using the latin.

Always, without exception, use the appropriate referencing styles. At RMIT University the referencing style used can be found in the Australian Guide to Legal Citation <http://mulr.law.unimelb.edu.au/go/aglc>

David Mejia-Canales
RMIT LSS Past President 2012 and Alumni

Top 10 mooting tips

In the RMIT JD you are expected to take part in simulated court proceedings called moot courts. The following are ten invaluable tips to help you moot effectively developed by a Barrister. For a full mooting guide visit your myRMIT site and go to the myStudies tab. Here you will find a Program called **MOOTCOURT Moot Court** which has a blackboard full of helpful guides and videos.

Present yourself professionally

- Dress the part and groom impeccably.

Be prepared

- Know the Acts and rules relevant to your mooting problem.
- Research in preparation for your case – e.g. Know the material facts/the defences that are available/case law etc.

Etiquette to the court - observe established protocols

- Always be respectful to the court – use expressions of respect fluently such as “...if the court pleases...”
- Win or lose, if your performance has won respect and admiration from the court, then you have not lost.

Officer of the court

- Know your duty as an Officer of the Court – e.g. you cannot knowingly mislead, must disclose all matters etc.
- Maintain strong ethics.

Be assertive – know your case

- Deliver your argument with conviction. To some extent – court is theatre.
- Be engaging.
- Admit when you don't know the answer, beginning with a firm 'yes' or 'no' when responding to a question.
- If you need a moment, take it. Respectfully

ask for time if you need to look up a point of law or about the case by saying “If your Honour will permit me to take a moment to...”

Anticipate your opponent's position so that you can rebut with confidence

- Use notes to guide you through your argument.
- Mark your spot when interrupted either by Counsel or a Justice. These will help you to get back on track efficiently when you resume your argument.

Accept that your adversary may deploy tactics to put you off

- Constant objections, irrelevant argument and frustration of process may be tactics that your adversary employs to undermine your argument. Do not allow your argument to be derailed.
- Be assertive, do not become angry, maintain a professional demeanor at all times and get back on track.

Remain communicative with your client (if applicable)

- Your client will not necessarily know what is happening in court – or to keep up with the 'legalese'. Explain at each step what is occurring in terms of process and outcomes.

Leverage technology

- The courts have a tolerance for discrete technology such as iPads. Use these to reference Acts and any other relevant material quickly.
- Take the time to figure out what you could have done better and implement these improvements next time.

Mr Neil Howard, Barrister at Law

The legal profession, what's in it for you?

When I commenced studying law I imagined that upon graduation I'd work as a lawyer in a role where my interests in people and problem solving would be applied. At the time, my knowledge and understanding of the profession was influenced by fellow students, television, media and rumours. My perception and expectations of the role of a traditional lawyer were limited. To me, a traditional lawyer fought, argued in court (and among friends), won - rarely lost - cases and navigated the sometimes complex legal system for clients both big and small.

The 'non-traditional' lawyer's life

I never dreamed that more than 10 years later my role as a lawyer would involve project management, creative thinking, publications, stakeholder relationships, business development and working with over 200 volunteers. Then again, throughout my time in the profession - and to my favour - the role of a lawyer has evolved and I am now one of many using my legal training, experience and skills to add breadth to the role of a lawyer.

I've managed to find a role that suits me perfectly, and in this dynamic legal market, which is constantly changing under the influences of industry growth or contraction, legislative change, and both local and global economic factors, fresh employment opportunities for new lawyers are emerging. So what are the big employment opportunities in law over the next few years? I had a chat to Mahlab Recruitment Consultant (and lawyer), Lucy Duncan who shared the following valuable insight.

What are the areas of practice most in demand?

The demand for lawyers in particular practice areas varies. However, there are a few key areas of law which Mahlab

consider are likely to continue to grow over the next few years, including: energy and resources, with a focus on mining and oil/gas, financial services and compliance, insolvency and restructuring, general litigation, health and aged care.

Where are the emerging 'outside the box' roles for lawyers?

And for those who, like me, are interested in working in one of the many novel legal roles, consider:

- knowledge management within the legal team of private practices (this can involve researching, drafting, training and educating legal staff and working with innovative technologies to assist the firm and its clients);
- commercial management, within an in house organisation (which may incorporate part legal and part commercial management work, including strategic involvement in a business); and
- case management/complaint and dispute resolution (for example, with government or independent bodies).

How will your legal career evolve?

My legal career has evolved as a direct result of the decisions I made, the chances I took and the people I selected to mentor me. I may never work as a lawyer again in the strict sense, but I enjoy coming to work and the diversity of my role. For me, this has been the key to career success.

Anna Alexander, LIV Young Lawyers

Manager 2012 This article first appeared on the LIV Young Lawyers Blog [liv.asn.](http://liv.asn.au/YoungLawyersBlog)

[au/YoungLawyersBlog](http://liv.asn.au/YoungLawyersBlog) in May 2012 and reproduced with the permission of the LIV. Visit livyounglawyers.asn.au

Admission to Legal Practice

The Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2008 require either Supervised Workplace Training (SWT) or Practical Legal Training (PLT) for admission to legal practice.

What is Supervised Workplace Training?

Supervised Workplace Training (SWT) is a twelve month 'traineeship' with a legal firm or office, working under the supervision of a qualified legal practitioner under rule 3.05.

A snapshot of SWT

- 12 months on-the-job training;
- predominantly practical training as an employee of a firm;
- employment is paid;
- mandatory requirement to complete ten core competencies; and
- some compulsory external training is required.

Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers

During their 12-month traineeship, law graduates must acquire appropriate understanding and competence in each of the compulsory 'skills', 'practice areas' and 'values'. Trainees are also expected to complete training in two optional practice areas (one from each cluster). The majority of the training required can be completed either in-house with their workplace (on the job), externally with a practical legal training (PLT) provider, or through a combination of both.

What is Practical Legal Training?

Practical Legal Training (PLT) is the most commonly chosen pathway to admission to practise as a lawyer in Australia. PLT is designed to ensure graduates are fully prepared to enter the legal profession with the practical training to complement their technical skills.

A snapshot of PLT

- must be completed with an approved PLT provider;
- can be completed in under six months;
- consists mainly of course work (either online or on-site at the education facility), with a combination of practical work experience completed in a legal environment; and
- is paid for by the student or a firm.

The following organisations are currently approved PLT providers:

Leo Cussen Centre for Law

The College of Law

ANU Legal Workshop

Training provided by the approved PLT providers complies with the relevant competency standards for entry level lawyers as set out in the rules.

Admission Requirements

Graduates are encouraged to read the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2008 carefully and familiarise themselves with the admission requirements and the documents required to be submitted to the Board.

Frequently Asked Questions

The Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) website has an extensive list of answers to some of the most frequently asked questions in relation to the admission rules. For further information regarding SWT or PLT go to the LIV website at liv.asn.au.

Anna Alexander, LIV Young Lawyers Manager

2012. Adapted from the Young Lawyers Section Admission to Legal Practice publication. For more information contact the Young Lawyers Section at younglaw.liv.asn.au

Trainees are also encouraged to contact the Board of Examiners for further information lawadmissions.vic.gov.au

Leo Cussen Centre for Law

Practical Training Course (Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice)

Practical Legal Training at Leo Cussen is practical, comprehensive, designed to meet the National Competency Standards for Entry Level Lawyers and delivered in a supportive training environment.

Successful completion of the Practical Training Course (PTC) entitles you to apply for admission to the legal profession as an Australian Lawyer which, in turn, entitles you to practise as an Australian Legal Practitioner in any Australian jurisdiction.

The Learning Experience

The Practical Training Course (PTC) is founded on the principle of 'learning by doing' and is designed to lead you to reach the required Competencies in an active and practical training environment.

Practical Training Course Onsite or Online – Your Choice

Online delivery offers flexibility to those who have work or family commitments and who enjoy the discipline of learning within a small online community. The Onsite course suits those looking for a training experience with face to face teaching and learning. It also suits those on overseas student visas.

In the Onsite course, you attend each business day from 9am to 5pm. In the Online course, trainees attend Leo Cussen onsite for 16 days spread throughout the course for intensive teaching, mentor consultations, assessment tasks and making applications. In the full time Online course, you will need to commit at least 25 hours a week to your PTC work. We also offer a part time Online PTC.

Features of the Practical Training Course (Online and Onsite):

- Building of practical legal skills in a broad range of practice areas.
- Mentoring by in-house legal training staff who guide your professional development.
- Visiting legal practitioners as instructors.
- Current Matter file program – run simulated client files within your own PTC 'law firm'.
- Extensive advocacy training.
- Collegial environment with the opportunity to build friendships and professional networks that can last your entire career.
- Career advice and guidance.
- Assistance to all trainees with professional placement. In our onsite course, we find the placement for our trainees.
- Employment Register for graduates.
- FEE-HELP available.

Information Session will be held on the course and the pathways to practice on Thursday **16 April, 4-6pm** (10.10.03).



Practical Legal Training



*The building blocks for
your legal career*

At Leo Cussen Centre for Law, you learn about the realities of legal practice from leading legal professionals who support and encourage your development as a lawyer. Our training is founded on the principle of 'learning by doing', with no exams. At Leo Cussen you will build practical legal skills and gain the confidence to make choices about your career.

PLT at Leo Cussen is:

- Practical
- Comprehensive
- Designed to meet the National Competency Standards for Entry Level Lawyers
- Guided by a Mentor

Choose the course that suits you best:

- Online (Full-time)
- Online (Part-time)
- Onsite (Full time)

For more information visit leocussen.edu.au/apply

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leocussen.edu.au

2015/2016

**July 2015 intake:
Apply by 15 May 2015**

**January 2016 intake:
Apply by 20 November
2015**

Nb: After first round offers are made, places may still be available after these dates.



A Leo Cussen graduate shares their story

I chose **Leo Cussen** for its reputation amongst the profession as a supportive and interactive environment where students can build upon and develop the skills necessary to make a successful transition from university student to professional, without the stresses of six-minute time increments, demanding clients and long hours.

Right from the start, I was exposed to the day-to-day tasks of a legal practitioner. From establishing and maintaining my own trust and office accounts, to preparing and lodging applications with a working registry and making appearances in various courts and tribunals, I was given hands-on, practical experience and challenged to produce my best.

Added to this was the opportunity to learn from and network with some of Melbourne's most respected legal professionals. The highlight of the course for me was an appearance in the Federal Magistrates' Court before the Honourable John Wilczek (former Justice of the Family Court of Australia)!

The Current Matter program, designed to provide a simulated experience of handling your own files, also allowed me to develop the essential skills of letter writing, client interviewing, drafting and costing.

For example, the Magistrates' Court Current Matter began with receiving initial instructions from a client, filing a complaint with the court, negotiating with a fellow trainee as my opposing party, drawing a deed of settlement, and finishing with a final letter and bill of costs.

This work was supervised by a mentor, also a practising member of the legal profession, who was responsible for approving my work, providing constructive feedback and monitoring my progress through the course.

The 3 week placement component at the end of the course was a further opportunity to apply the skills I had learned. I quickly learned that my time at Leo Cussen had thoroughly equipped me for practice, as I was handed a civil enforcement file, and asked to advise on the appropriate course of action and draw up the necessary documents. As we had covered this topic not two weeks prior, I knew the appropriate course was to prepare a Summons for Oral Examination.

The skills I had refined during the course eventually paid off, as about 4 weeks after my placement had finished I was called by the firm and offered a full-time position.

I would have no hesitation in recommending the PTC course to law graduates looking for a way to consolidate their skills and prepare for their first job in the legal profession in a supportive, hands-on and challenging learning environment.

Aaron Peppin, Lawyer
Kenna Teasdale Lawyers Melbourne

The College of Law

Australia's Largest Provider of PLT

The College of Law sets the standard for Practical Legal Training (PLT) in Australia. The College is Australia's largest provider of PLT, with campuses in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. We also conduct programs in Adelaide, regional Queensland, as well as onsite sessions in London.

The College of Law Advantage

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in skills workshops, role plays, simulations and feedback sessions under the guidance of our lecturers. Our campus is conveniently located at 459 Little Collins Street, Melbourne CBD.

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To assist our students to find work experience, The College of Law Victoria and the Law Institute of Victoria have partnered together to source placements. We are working with the profession to find opportunities that meet the requirements of the work experience component of The College's PLT program.



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