

*Careers &  
Clerkships  
Guide*

**RMIT LSS  
2017**

This publication was designed and edited by Mieke Matimba. If you have any feedback or if you would like to contribute to the next edition of the RMIT LSS Careers Guide, please contact:

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**RMIT UNIVERSITY**  
**STUDENT UNION**  
AFFILIATE

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# MinterEllison

## Innovate

Partner Gareth Jolly and Associate Cameron Loughlin  
after winning the firm's national Hackathon for  
their new legal service app.



**IT ALL  
STARTS  
HERE**



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# Contents

# 2

## INTRODUCTION

- Welcome from LSS President - 3
- Forward from RMIT Program Director - 4
- Special Message from Magistrate Raj Malhotra - 5

# 18

## PRACTICAL LEGAL TRAINING

- Practical Legal Training Leo Cussen - 19
  - The Skills Gap, C.O.L - 20
  - PLT Plus, C.O.L - 21
- Kathryn McGregor shares her PLT experience at Leo's - 22
  - Choosing a PLT Provider - 24

# 39

## FIRM PROFILES

- Ashurst - 40
- Baker McKenzie - 40
- Russell Kennedy - 41
- Lander & Roger - 41
- Allens Linklaters - 44
  - DLA Piper - 44
- MinterEllison - 45

# 9

## CAREER PLANNING

- Career Action Plan - 10
- Top Tips for your Cover Letter, MinterEllison - 11
- Preparing your C.V. - 13
- Traineeship & Clerkship Schedule of dates - 14
- Clerkship Guidelines 2017 - 15
- Traineeship Guidelines 2017 - 16
- Your Health & Wellbeing Plan - 17

# 25

## LIFE IN THE FIELD

- Life at the VGSO, Samudhya Jayasekara - 26
- Where there's a Will there's a Way, Sophie Cohen - 27
- Where Volunteering Can Take You, Gary Lung - 29
- The Ins & Outs of Baker McKenzie, Otis David - 31
  - The Ashurst Experience - 32
- 2015's Female Young Gun of the Year, Elizabeth Aitken - 33
  - Working at Lander & Rogers, Sarah Harkin - 34
  - Go Your Own Way, Laura Ballantyne-Brodie - 36
  - Getting a Head Start, Declan Holmes - 37



## SHARE OUR VISION SHAPE YOUR FUTURE



DLA Piper is a global law firm with lawyers in the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

We are a law firm with momentum. Over the past decade, DLA Piper has undergone rapid expansion, responding to global markets and helping our clients deliver on their business strategies. In doing so, we are uniquely placed to provide our people with the global career opportunities they are looking for.

In Australia we are trusted legal advisors to approximately a third of the ASX 100 companies and all levels of government. We have offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Canberra.

### IT'S IN OUR DNA

At its heart, DLA Piper is an entrepreneurial and dynamic firm. We have a supportive and performance based culture founded on the diversity of our people, the communities we operate in and the clients we work with.

### WINNING

1 Global M&A volume: DLA Piper has retained its number one ranking globally for overall deal volume by mergermarket for the seventh consecutive year.

#3 Global brand: DLA Piper ranked third on the Acritas Global Elite Brand Index 2016.

+1,000: The world's leading legal directories have named more than 1,000 of our lawyers and practices among the best in their fields.

In Australia, we are recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

We are also members of the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation, supporting workplace psychological health and safety.

### YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

We provide cutting-edge learning and development programs, and an opportunity to work alongside some of the best legal minds around.

As a clerk, you can expect to have a varied experience both in and outside the office. You will gain first-hand experience in the practice of law by doing real legal work.

Joining us as a clerk is your path to a Graduate position. At DLA Piper we recruit to retain and once you qualify, we will continue to offer you exceptional career opportunities, in an environment that is challenging, rewarding and, we believe, truly different from our competitors.

We are also committed to supporting our people's desire to experience working life in other parts of the world. For our Graduates we offer the opportunity to apply for a six month rotation to one of our offices in Asia. We believe our secondment program fosters a global mind-set and is critical to our success.

### WHAT IT TAKES

Being an excellent lawyer requires more than just comprehensive technical knowledge. Every aspect of our approach is tailored carefully to our clients, their business needs and industry. Successful applicants are not only bright, as demonstrated through strong academics, but they also bring unique life experiences and insights to the table. Our lawyers are excellent communicators, collaborative team players and commercially minded, because our clients are the core of our business.

**For more information about our clerkship opportunities, please visit [www.dlapipergraduates.com](http://www.dlapipergraduates.com)**

# Introductions

# Welcome from the LSS President



Welcome to the 2017 Careers & Clerkships guide. It is never too early or too late to plan for your career in the law. If you are planning a career in corporate law, early planning may help you secure a clerkship, however if you are still undecided there are plenty of options in and out of traditional law roles.

Inside you'll find a wide variety of articles about practice in different areas of law; from commercial law and the going to the bar, through to government and alternative dispute resolution. There is advice from recruiters on the legal market, information on seasonal clerkships, articles about resumes and information about the different PLT providers. Also don't forget to attend the information sessions at RMIT that contain information specifically catered to RMIT students.

I would like to thank our Premium Sponsors, MinterEllison; our Gold Sponsors Leo Cussen Centre for Law; our Silver Sponsors Zappas Law, Ashurst and Lander & Rogers; and all of our Bronze Sponsors Allens Linklaters, Baker & McKenzie, Clayton Utz, DLA Piper, Lawskool and Russell Kennedy. Without their support none of this would be possible.

I would like to thank the people who contributed articles to this guide, and to the LSS Committee for their efforts. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and of invaluable benefit to our members.

I wish you all the best in your future legal career.

**Elise Steegstra**  
President & Secretary RMIT LSS  
president@rmitlss.com

# Forward from the Program Director



As the RMIT Juris Doctor celebrates its 10th year, we remain focused on your career development.

Whether you are looking to enhance an existing career, seeking a career in the traditional legal sector or looking for a new direction, the market for graduate positions is highly competitive. I believe that one of the keys to employment success is strategic planning. The RMIT JD offers you an opportunity to hone your skills and build a professional profile. At RMIT we focus on practical skills and there are a host of initiatives available to help you plan your career. If you haven't already, explore your options with the below programs:

- We hold on-campus career workshops throughout the year.
- We support an annual Legal Careers Fair by the Law Institute Victoria.
- We provide employment coaching.
- We have introduced a new placement program to provide students with real-life work experience. If you are interested in a placement contact [kathy.douglas@rmit.edu.au](mailto:kathy.douglas@rmit.edu.au)
- We offer a subject in clinical legal practice through the Mental Health Legal Centre and the Centre for Innovative Justice. Clinical legal practice enables students to gain practical experience advising clients under supervision. For more information contact [stan.winford@rmit.edu.au](mailto:stan.winford@rmit.edu.au).
- We offer career advice through the Centre for Innovative Justice: [www.rmit.edu.au/gradbuslaw/innovativejustice](http://www.rmit.edu.au/gradbuslaw/innovativejustice), and RMIT Career Development and Employment: [www.rmit.edu.au](http://www.rmit.edu.au)

The LSS also offers a wide range of events and information sessions to help guide you through the JD. So get active, start planning your career and make use of the excellent resources we are making available to you.

**Professor Penny Weller**  
JD Program Director  
RMIT Graduate School of Business and Law



## Special Message from Magistrate Raj Malhotra

After being asked to impart some wisdom to RMIT Juris Doctor students I thought about the journey that I have taken to get to where I am, and the people that I have met along the way who have had an impact on me. The number grew very quickly. If I were to thank everyone of those people we would be here forever. From the most junior or inexperienced staff who just said 'hi' and made me feel welcome to the most respected senior judicial officers and members of state who guided and chided me along the way; there are hundreds if not thousands!

Message one: networking is important as people from all walks of life and people of diverse experiences can be of great influence.

I will, if I may, indulge you in a personal story. This story starts in July 1976. My mum and dad, came to Australia with one suitcase or 'trunk' as I fondly remember it being called, and \$500 Australian dollars. Imagine if you will, landing on foreign shores. Whilst you are educated and can speak the language, you are heavily accented, brown skinned and know no one. Not a soul. And you have a two-and-a-half-year old toddler in tow! Remember there is no internet. Phone calls are prohibitively expensive and made only in emergencies or in the most special of circumstances via operator connect.

From that beginning I have mostly happy memories, many of which are represented in photos proudly displayed on the walls of my parents' home in Perth to this day. Particularly the achievements of my two younger sisters and I.

Unfortunately there are less happy memories too. The innumerable times I saw my family targeted by racism. And the numerous times I got into trouble at school for responding to those situations. Often just for defending myself or my family or my culture.

In engaging in that reflection, it became apparent to me how close I could have ended up taking a different path. Primary and high schools. Uni and normal life. It has been a tough road on occasion. But I guess that is part of the reason I pursued law. I hoped both to address the injustice I saw in the world through my eyes, for individuals and the broader community alike. I kept searching for a way to make that difference and I think I have finally found it.

Those that know me can attest to me having what some would call hard views. Tough but fair I hope. These reflections give me pause to perhaps temper and further consider why people find themselves where they are. Now having already sat in this Court on a number of occasions and my invaluable and happy experience sitting at the parole board, I've listened intently for any opportunity to direct people towards a better path. To understand someone's circumstances more fully, makes in my view, for a fairer and more impactful decision. Being a target of racism and on occasion a victim of the types of crime that we deal with in this Court (burglary; robbery), the views of victims and the community are never far from my mind.

I hope that the insight into my background gives you some understanding of the type of judicial officer I hope to be. Further, I hope this story has highlighted that you should embrace your differences. No two law students are going to be the same and every single one of you will bring something different to the table. The most important message to take away from this is to follow your beliefs and values. It is those things that will set you apart and drive you.

Your law degree can take you on many paths and will continue to evolve throughout your career. Who knows, one day we may be colleagues.

*“...embrace your differences. No two law students are going to be the same and every single one of you will bring something different to the table. The most important message to take away from this is to follow your beliefs and values”*

# IT ALL STARTS HERE

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# MinterEllison



## Collaborate

Licensed conveyancers, Jacinta Lagana and Ashley Wilson, meeting to review a special conditions contract for their client.

# Career Planning

# Create your future career action plan

## The Middle Years: Time to get experience

Understanding your career options and preparing to meet the requirements of graduate employers are the major career development tasks of the middle years of your program. Some tools to help you are:

- The 'Plan My Career' section in the Careers Toolkit
- [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

## Explore your career options

- Check CareerHub <http://careerhub.rmit.edu.au>, for resources and the many career related programs and events on campus including expos, workshops, seminars, information sessions and more.
- Join your professional association, attend activities and start to build your network.
- Keep your resume current.
- Get program-related work experience. This may be vacation work, an internship, a professional placement or any other work related to your program - paid or unpaid.
- Consider doing voluntary work to develop skills, experience, confidence and networks.

## Develop the skills employers value

- Participate in campus activities to further develop leadership, organisational and interpersonal skills through RMIT LEAD, RMIT Link and RUSU.
- Consider how international experience will enhance your career prospects. Study abroad, summer camps, international volunteering - there are many programs to choose from.

## Final Year: Engage! Connect with your career

If you are completing an undergraduate or postgraduate degree and wish to apply for graduate positions early preparation is essential. Recruitment by major graduate employers begins in February for positions beginning the following year.

- Attend employer information sessions on campus.
- Visit the Graduate Opportunities website at: [www.graduateopportunities.com.au](http://www.graduateopportunities.com.au) and Unigrad at [www.unigrad.com.au](http://www.unigrad.com.au)
- Research the employers you wish to apply to by visiting their websites.

Source: Extract from RMIT Careers Toolkit. Refer to Disclaimer in the PDF online.

## Refine your job search

- Check [www.rmit.edu.au/careers](http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers) for job search tips.
- Have your application checked by completing the Application Express online tutorial: [www.rmit.edu.au/careers/applicationexpress](http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers/applicationexpress)
- Make sure that you are known by the academic staff you wish to nominate as referees.
- Watch videos on interview techniques and use the interview simulator in the Careers Toolkit.
- Familiarise yourself with Assessment Centre activities and selection testing - see Quick tips for assessment centres and Employment seminars on CareerHub.

Besides graduate programs and other advertised vacancies, you may make a direct approach to an employer of interest or use your networks to uncover opportunities.

## Careers Toolkit

**The Careers Toolkit is an online resource for RMIT students to support student global career development. The Careers Toolkit gives you access to all the information you need to:**

- Write professional resumes and application letters
- Succeed at interviews
- Plan your career development and
- Increase your employability

### The Careers Toolkit also contains:

- Global job search for over 50 countries
- An interview simulator
- Practice psychometric tests
- E-learning modules
- Downloadable careers quick tips
- Links to over 230 professional associations; and
- Over 100 videos with advice from industry professionals

## Top tips for your Cover Letter

### 1.1 Know what you are selling

- (a) Before you even put pen to paper (fingers to keyboard) you need to decide what you bring to the table. Have a clear idea of 3 – 5 key values, these are the basis of your business case that you will deliver to the organisation. You need to be able to communicate this value clearly and confidently so get comfortable with them for your interview!

### 1.2 Yes, it is a letter...

- (a) Yes, this means you need to find the name of the recruiter that you are applying to, all it takes is a quick Google search to make sure that your cover letter looks well researched. After you have their name you might even want to search them on LinkedIn, a little extra knowledge here can be useful down the track.

### 1.3 Keep it simple

- (a) A significant number of great candidates fall down on this section. The clerkship recruitment process is one of the highest (if not the highest) volume recruitment processes that you will ever be exposed to, so you need to make sure that the recruiter is able to distil the most pertinent information as fast as possible. A great way to check this is have someone who has never read your cover letter to look it over, then ask them what they thought were the key takeaway messages.

### 1.4 Structure, Structure, Structure

- (a) Aim to split your cover letter in to three main paragraphs:
  - (i) Initially clarify what role you are applying for and any critical logistical details that are important for the role: "penultimate student, Bachelor of Law etc".
  - (ii) If you are applying to a number of firms this is your chance to tailor your message; Have you interacted with anyone inside the organisation? What specific matters is the organisation working on that resonate with you (and why).
  - (iii) This last section is your call to action, the goal is to have the recruiter turn the page to read through your CV. It is time to use the key values that you defined earlier and support them with accomplishment statements.

## Top tips for your CV

### 1.5 What's relevant?

- (a) Remember that you don't want your best achievements to get lost in the noise! If your academic achievements list goes back to "Dux of year 6" it's likely time to find some more recent ones! Again a 3 – 5 rule is useful for these areas of your CV and will help make sure the recruiter won't skim over that section and miss that you won the Deans Award in your second year.

### 1.6 Professional!

- (a) Photos... Please don't, what you look like is not relevant to your ability to do the job and it takes up space that you can use for more useful information. This goes for other information that we just don't need to know (age, height, marital status etc).
- (b) Email addresses should be kept to first and last name or university addresses, this is your chance to update from the email account you signed up to when you were younger. Your voicemail message should also be active and professional.

### 1.7 Employment entries

- (a) These are vital and you need to make sure the recruiter can pick out all the information that they need:
  - (i) Organisation and job title (include area ie. Paralegal - Commercial Disputes).
  - (ii) Clearly defined start and finish dates, along with the number of days per week.
  - (iii) Responsibilities – These are your overarching operational duties (bullet points are good here).
  - (iv) Development – At this point in your career it is important to list what you gained from that period of employment... What skills do you have now that you did not have when you commenced that role?

### 1.8 References... on request?

- (a) Outside of a clerkship application "References available on request" is an entirely reasonable entry for this section. However, put yourself in the recruiters shoes and picture gathering referee names and phone numbers for every clerkship applicant (it's a sizeable job). We won't make contact with your referee's without checking in with you first, but making things as easy as possible can only work in your favour!

### 1.9 Three pages is your absolute maximum

- (a) This is non-negotiable (and don't try to circumvent the rules by adjusting the margins on your page). You need to be concise when listing your achievements, this may mean being ruthless when cutting out certain entries. Keep it punchy!

# Preparing your Curriculum Vitae

Your CV should provide a snapshot of your experience and achievements to a future employer. We've come up with some tips to help get you started.

## Let's talk formatting:

Your CV should be in a professional font on a white background. Keep it simple. Forget borders and shading. It should be nicely spaced and have plenty of white space. Start this CV fresh and do not just save over the CV you have on file. Make sure all the headings are consistent throughout the documents and order everything chronologically starting with the skills and experience you've gained in the legal sphere. Simply put, it should look like it came from a law firm.

## A list of what should be included:

- Contact details (As many telephone numbers as possible and particularly a number to get hold of you during office hours. If your work line is given you may want to put "please be discreet" next to it if you are concerned.)

- Education (include the date and years/institutions where you did your degrees, noting any honours or prizes)

- Legal experience
- Try to restrict your work experience to things you

have done in the past two to three years and tailor what you include to the role you are applying for.

- Include your best and most relevant achievements. Include memberships of any professional networks you are or have been a part of.

- Also include your interests (but keep this brief). Employers want to know that their employees are well-rounded and social, so try to include things you most like to do in your spare time as a way to stay healthy, relaxed and to have fun.

- You should include 2 to 3 references and try to avoid personal references. Make sure you let your referees know in advance.

## Things to avoid:

There are the obvious things:

- Spelling errors and grammatical mistakes. Once you have finished the document put it down for a few days before you go back and check for mistakes again. Give it to a friend to comb through as well.

- Anything in cursive

- Photos

- Coloured fonts and borders

- Listing hollow strengths (e.g. teamwork, excellence, empathy)

- Lies

- Objectives that do not align with gaining a clerkship or employment with that firm (e.g. enrolling in medical school to become a doctor)

- Embellishments to make it seem more professional. Stick to your strengths and achievements that will distinguish you from others.

*"Have a friend look it over, and make sure you take a break before you view it again with fresh eyes – it's amazing the little things you'll pick up after a good night's sleep."*

## Checklist:

Before sending out your CV, spell check it, print it out and view it on paper. Have a friend look it over, and make sure you take a break before you view

it again with fresh eyes– it's amazing the little things you'll pick up after a good night's sleep. Your resume should ideally not be longer than 3 pages.

Make the effort to find out who is in charge of reviewing applications at each firm and address the cover letter accordingly. Ensure that the application is addressed correctly. A remarkable number of CV's received by law firms are addressed to the wrong firm. AND FINALLY, make sure you submit your application before the due date!

## Mieke Matimba

Vice President RMIT LSS

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# 2017 LIV Seasonal Clerkship & Traineeship Guidelines

## SCHEDULE OF DATES

### SEASONAL CLERKSHIPS

ACTION	DATE
Application period opens	<b>MONDAY, 10 JULY 2017</b>
Application period closes	<b>SUNDAY, 13 AUGUST 2017</b> 11.59pm
Offers made from	<b>THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2017</b> 10am

### TRAINEESHIPS

ACTION	DATE
Market application period opens	<b>FRIDAY, 11 AUGUST 2017</b>
Priority offers made from	<b>TUESDAY, 8 AUGUST 2017</b> 10am
Priority offers close	<b>WEDNESDAY, 9 AUGUST 2017</b> 4pm
Market application period closes	<b>SUNDAY, 27 AUGUST 2017</b> 11.59pm
Traineeship market offers made from	<b>MONDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2017</b> 10am

# LIV Seasonal Clerkship Guidelines 2017

- 1** To be eligible to apply for seasonal clerkships a student must be in their final or penultimate year of study, that is, they intend to commence their final semester in 2018. Students who have already completed their law degree are eligible to apply; however, applications will be accepted at the discretion of each firm. <sup>1</sup>
- 2** Applications for seasonal clerkships will open no earlier than 9am on Monday, 10 July 2017.
- 3** Applications for seasonal clerkships will close no later than 11.59pm on Sunday, 13 August 2017.
- 4** Any offer made under these guidelines relates to clerkships within a one year period from the date of offer, but can be extended in circumstances agreed between the student and the law firm for a further one year period if a student requests a deferral of the clerkship.
- 5** Any offer of clerkship must remain open for a minimum period of 4 business hours from the time the offer was made or until 10am the following business day for offers made after 1pm, subject to paragraph 5(a):
  - a. Students must not hold more than four seasonal clerkship offers for a period of more than 2 business hours.For the purpose of this paragraph “business hours” is defined as the period between 9am and 5pm and “business day” means Monday to Friday.
- 6** Law firms will make offers concerning seasonal clerkships from 10am, Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time on Thursday, 12 October 2017.
- 7** All offers made pursuant to paragraph 6 of these Guidelines will be made by email. All email offers must detail:
  - a. the terms of the offer; and
  - b. that the offer is made pursuant to these Guidelines.Signatory law firms are permitted to make follow-up calls to offerees once the offer has been made by email.
- 8** Law firms who have entered sponsorship arrangements with disadvantaged students, such as those employed under the Indigenous Cadetship Program, are exempt from complying with the Guidelines in relation to those students.
- 9** A law firm may withdraw from the guidelines by giving (30) days written notice of its intention to the Law Institute of Victoria (LIV), the law faculties and law student societies at all Victorian law schools.
- 10** The LIV will maintain an up to date list of all signatory law firms which will be publically available on the LIV website.
- 11** Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the law firm’s clerkship application policy to which they are applying.
- 12** Signatory law firms are not obligated to offer seasonal clerkships each year but must follow the Seasonal Clerkship Guidelines in the event that they do.
- 13** All signatories agree to comply with all legislative requirements including those imposed by or otherwise required under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights, Victorian Anti-Bullying Legislation and Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic).
- 14** These Guidelines are in place to ensure fairness throughout the graduate recruitment process. However, each signatory is responsible for setting its own application processes and this aspect is outside the scope of these Guidelines and the Law Institute of Victoria’s involvement. Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the signatory’s clerkship application policy to which they are applying and allow sufficient time for lodgement of their application.
- 15** Where an unforeseen error occurs in the lodgement of an application made pursuant to these Guidelines, the student may make a case for consideration to the relevant signatory, but it is at the discretion of the signatory concerned as to whether the application is accepted.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

T: 9607 9370 E: [younglaw@liv.asn.au](mailto:younglaw@liv.asn.au)



# LIV Traineeship Guidelines 2017

- 1** Applications for graduate traineeships will open no earlier than 9am on Friday, 11 August 2017.
- 2** Applications for graduate traineeships will close no later than 11.59pm on Sunday, 27 August 2017.
- 3** Subject to paragraph 3(a) any offer made under these guidelines relates to a graduate traineeship commencing in 2018; it is open to students who have already completed their law degree or students who will commence their final semester in 2017.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Successful applicants who have already completed their law degree are eligible to commence their graduate traineeship prior to 2018 by agreement between the law firm and the applicant.
- 4** An applicant who, due to “genuine necessity”, will be unable to attend an interview during the interview period, should apply to the Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) for permission to either:
  - a. be interviewed at an earlier date, or
  - b. be interviewed by electronic means if the applicant is overseas at the time of the genuine necessity application and will not return prior to, or during the interview period. The form of electronic means is to be agreed upon between the law firm and the applicant.

“Genuine necessity” is defined as the need to be outside of Victoria during the interview period, for the purpose of study, work experience or other purpose deemed reasonable by the LIV. Applications should be made to the LIV Young Lawyers Manager in writing and include appropriate supporting documentation. Written permission is to be granted at the sole discretion of the LIV.
- 5** Except as provided in paragraphs 8, 9 and 10, law firms will make offers or arrangements concerning traineeships from 10am Eastern Daylight Saving Time on Monday, 9 October 2017, Graduate traineeships can be deferred in circumstances agreed between the student and the firm for a further one year period if a student requests a deferral of the traineeship.
- 6** All offers made pursuant to paragraph 5 of these Guidelines will be made by email. Law firms will not make follow-up calls to offerees before 11am on the date of offer. All email offers must detail:
  - a. the terms of the offer; and
  - b. that the offer is made pursuant to these Guidelines.
- 7** Except as provided in paragraph 10, an offer of traineeship will remain open for a period of not less than twenty-four (24) hours from the time the offer was made or until 11am the following business day for offers made prior to 11am. Firms should make this known to students at the time of making offers in accordance with paragraph seven.
- 8** Law firms who have entered sponsorship arrangements with disadvantaged students, such as those employed under the Indigenous Cadetship Program, are exempt from complying with these guidelines in relation to those students.
- 9** Law firms may make ‘priority offers’ of traineeships to eligible students in accordance with paragraph 3 on the dates set out in paragraph 10, to the following students:
  - a. students who within the previous two years preceding the date of making the offer referred to in paragraph 10, have substantially completed seasonal clerkships of at least two weeks’ duration with the offering firm, either in Victoria or at one of the firm’s interstate or international offices;

# 2017

# Your Health & Wellbeing Plan

Let's be real, seasonal clerkship season is stressful and overwhelming. You need to keep up with everything you're already doing, and add applications, interviews and firm networking events.

When you're in the middle of it, tired and worn out, you may feel like the whole process is a barbaric and sadistic...and you'll be right. But hang in there because if you manage to land a clerkship will be worth it...plus, if you want to work in a commercial firm you don't have much choice (feeling pumped? :p).

## **MAKE A PLAN**

Do your research and make a list of the firms you would like to apply to. Be methodical. Make sure you have the due dates marked out and a plan to complete 2 or 3 applications a week. Some firms require a list of questions to be answered and submitted with the application also, so before you start, it's a good idea to know exactly what is required for each application. There are so many resources available online that give you 'sample interview questions'. Get an idea of what you may be asked so that you can prepare.

## **TALK TO YOUR PEERS**

Resist the urge to switch off your phone and hide in your study-cave. Make time to have coffee and see your friends. Not only can you share information and help each other out with applications, but having people who understand what you're going through will provide relief. We all love our family and friends outside of law, but there are moments when despite their best efforts, they just won't understand what you're doing all this for...in those moments, dial-a-law-buddie.

## **SAVE YOUR ANNUAL LEAVE**

A lot of JD students are working full-time or part-time. Try to plan ahead and save a few days of leave so that when you really need it, you can score yourself some extra hours. You might need it just to sleep and take a break, or it might give you a chance to catch-up on some study. Either way, it is always a good idea to have a Plan B.

## **KEEP A BALANCE**

Clerkship season is stressful, but there is a difference between 'feeling the burn', and running yourself into the ground.

You need to look after your health first; As law students we are naturally risk-averse people, however, for some reason we're not making it part of our regular 'risk-assessment' to cover our wellbeing. We need to prepare for this just like we prepare for exams:

- Get organised well in advance. Make sure you know what the requirements are for each application so there are no surprises. Diarise everything in your life so that you can see where all your other commitments fall in relation to the seasonal clerkship applications.
- Talk to your doctor. If you had questions about an assignment, you would ask your tutor before the due date. If you have concerns or need information about combating stress before you actually get stressed, ask your doctor about what you can do.
- Watch your diet. Buy yourself some multivitamins and make meal plans so that your body is in good shape to take on the increased stress. This means fresh fruit and vegetables people – I'm not talking red-bull and mi-goreng.
- Just like the pre-exam cram, make yourself a strict schedule that ensures you get enough exercise and sleep AND STICK TO IT.

## **IT'S OK IF YOU DON'T GET A CLERKSHIP**

The idea is to prepare as well as you can, so that you're in the best position you can be, to try and get yourself some work experience. Keep in mind that there are a huge number of students applying and most firms only take about 30 students per intake. It is not a lost cause if you do not get a place. A number of firms do take clerks in their final year and there are plenty of other ways you can get legal experience. Think about it – there are only a small number of positions available, but it's not only those lucky few who end up getting jobs. Think about Community Legal Centres, Government Organisations, Courts, small suburban law firms, Not-For-Profits, MNCs and other opportunities in the legal field that might not be clerkships, but that will get you in to see what goes on.

## **Mieke Matimba**

Vice President RMIT LSS  
vicepresident@rmitlss.com

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# THE SKILLS GAP

## WHY AND HOW TO START CLOSING THE GAP WHILE YOU ARE STILL AT LAW SCHOOL

There has been much media coverage recently suggesting that what you learn in law school is not keeping pace with industry needs.<sup>1</sup> While the academic side of law school is suitable for teaching legal theory and black letter law, it is argued that law students are not developing the practical skills they will need to support their transition into the workplace, whether as a lawyer or in another field.

Missing skills noted by employers, and observed empirically, include commerciality, emotional intelligence, critical reasoning, time-management, interpersonal skills (ie. oral communication, building professional relationships, meeting skills, delegation and feedback) and mindfulness (ie. the ability to focus and overcome distractions).

In 2014, The Productivity Commission released its report on Access to Justice Arrangements. The Commission reported that more emphasis should be placed on teaching skills, rather than accumulating knowledge, including practical training, interpersonal skills and business management:

*“Today, the challenge is not obtaining information, but rather knowing how to analyse it, use it, and place it in context. In other words, the art of the professional lies less in an encyclopaedic memory but more in the skill of accessing, understanding and wielding the knowledge.”<sup>2</sup>*

Susan Ferrier (National Managing Partner, People Performance and Culture at KPMG) believes that soft skills *“are the new hard skills”*.<sup>3</sup> Because the internet provides a great storehouse of easily accessible knowledge, *“having big parts of your brain storing technical stuff is going to be less valuable in the world of the future”*, she says. *“How you collaborate, solve problems creatively and authentically lead people will matter more.”<sup>4</sup>*

Basically, the argument is that legal information is available to everyone, so the service lawyers need to offer is the whole solution – they need to work with legal information to make it user friendly and solution based. Lawyers need to be able to distill, process and use information in a way that provides value – ie. in a way the client can’t.

These skills traditionally tended to be absorbed informally and usually in the workplace, but employers are now looking for evidence of these skills before hiring graduates.

<sup>1</sup> For example: Lawyers Weekly *Universities fail to keep pace with industry*, 20 October 2015

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/access-justice/report/access-justice-volume1.pdf> at p229

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/national/the-rise-of-soft-skills-why-top-marks-no-longer-get-the-best-jobs-20150314-1440ds.html>

<sup>4</sup> ibid

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## A Career in the Law after PLT at Leo Cussen

At University I completed a BA and LLB and completed an exchange at Uppsala University for a semester. I was unsure what area of Law I wanted to practise in and I wanted to gain insight into all aspects of Law, I knew that I could not do this through a 'traditional' articulated clerk position, and the client files at Leo Cussen were a great way to get into the different areas of practice. I didn't have any legal connections when I started the course and knowing that Leo Cussen organise a placement for onsite PLT trainees was of great comfort. Further, having been a student for so many years and juggling part time work, I felt that Leo Cussen would be a great training ground for getting used to being in an office environment Monday – Friday.

I currently work as a criminal solicitor at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS). I provide advice and representation for Aboriginal clients in criminal matters in the Magistrates' and Children's Court. VALS services the whole of Victoria and each solicitor is allocated a metropolitan court and a regional court. So, fortnightly, I will travel to a regional area and spend 2-3 days being the Aboriginal legal representative for the local community. I am constantly learning about different areas of the criminal law and how to engage with people from clients.

to prosecutors to magistrates. I thoroughly enjoy appearing at court and developing my advocacy skills. VALS provides an 'holistic' style approach with our clients and we are able to link them in to culturally specific services which is of great benefit to the clients and the community overall. Being able to help a client navigate their way through the system with tailored support is rewarding. We have a very collegial environment and there is always support for new lawyers. My job is constantly challenging and surprising – no day is ever the same – and that is fantastic!

I really enjoyed the advocacy and criminal areas of training in the Leo Cussen PLT. I met some tremendous instructors whom I will still call for advice and they are more than happy to give that advice. I also enjoyed the social aspect of Leo Cussen, I have great friends that I have met from my course and still remain in contact with. My placement that they arranged at NAAJA in Darwin was the cherry on top!

The Leo Cussen PLT gave me the training and confidence that I needed to know that I could practise law and be effective in this role. Being able to apply all the legal knowledge you have gained in a practical way was tremendous. For more information on Leo Cussen's PLT course visit: [www.leocussen.edu.au](http://www.leocussen.edu.au)



**Kathryn McGregor**  
Solicitor - Criminal Law Section,  
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service



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## CHOOSING A PLT PROVIDER

There is no better way to get a feel for a place than to go and see it for yourself, so attend the PLT provider's open nights and make sure you talk to the staff and ask questions about the course. Get in touch with students from each provider and ask them about their experiences, and remember overall that the decision is a personal choice. Make the right choice for you.

Also, don't be disheartened if you do not get a place straight away. Remember there are a large number of graduates finishing law school every year and there are a limited number of spaces. Take the opportunity to work or travel or to just take a break!

Typically if you do not get an offer in your first round you will be allocated a place at a later date so do not despair.

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- If completing the online version of the course, you need to organise your own placement, but Leo Cussen has a dedicated Placement Advisor to help you with that.
- You are assigned a mentor, which you share with a small group.
- They are the only PLT provider with a Careers Advisor who will assist you with job options, job search, CVs, cover letters and interviews.
- There is no class cap for the online course. Places for the onsite course are capped and drawn by ballot. A small number of applicants for the onsite course could miss out, but they will be offered a guaranteed spot in the next intake. They are also offered a place in the online course if they prefer.
- No tests or exams



# A Day in the Life of...



## Life at the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office

I commenced my graduate traineeship at the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office in March 2017, having completed a Juris Doctor (J.D.) at the University of New South Wales in Sydney.

As the only non-Melbournian trainee in the program, I was nervous about moving interstate, and was particularly apprehensive about my knowledge (or lack thereof) of Victorian law. While my introduction to Melbourne involved living out of packing boxes, spending excessive amounts of time on realestate.com.au and unsuccessfully trying to figure out trams, I was pleased to find that my introduction to the VGSO consisted of a week of informative induction sessions which provided an ideal transition to my first day of 'real work.'

For the first of my four rotations, I was placed in the Government and Public Law branch where I encountered complex and intriguing legal questions that I would not have come upon anywhere else. I have so far completed an interesting variety of tasks for each of the teams within the branch, gaining knowledge in areas ranging from planning law to regulatory prosecutions. I have written and compiled a brief to counsel, prepared an affidavit based on a client's instructions, observed a contested

VCAT hearing, researched questions of statutory interpretation and prepared preliminary advice on the merits of a case.

Overall, my experience in GaPL has been overwhelmingly positive. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning 'on the job'; acquiring new concepts by working through tasks, but have also equally appreciated being provided with a high calibre of supervision, resources and support along the way.

My traineeship experience has also been especially affirmative because of the VGSO's work culture. Being a trainee in a small group of 7, I hope to get to know all of my fellow trainees quite intimately, given that we meet every week for Friday night drinks to chat about the steep learning curves we have all unexpectedly embarked on. And while I initially thought I would prefer to be cloistered in an office, the open plan floor structure allows me to 'workshop' ideas and strategies with my supervisor, and hear all about the interesting matters that other people are working on.

Looking back over the past few weeks, my traineeship experience has vastly exceeded my expectations. My unsolicited advice to law students applying to traineeships this year would be to approach job-hunting as you would online dating; prioritise common interests and compatibility.

By Samudhya Jayasekara



## Where There Is A Will, There Is A Way

As a 20-something year old embarking on my legal career, I thought by the time I reached the age I am now (to save you guessing, 45) I would have it all worked out. I'll let you in on a little secret - I don't have it all worked out. And of all the successful, entrepreneurial women I know, many leaders in their fields, none has it all worked out. Most of us are still aspiring to an unattainable goal of the perfect life balance, 'faking it 'til we make it'.

I have hurtled through my career in fits and starts without any clear sense of direction, but with a healthy dose of unbridled enthusiasm, like a 16 year old L-plater driving a manual car. Until recently, I haven't enjoyed the clarity of an ultimate career goal, but have appreciated every unmade road, meandering path, and rabbit hole my journey has taken me down. I have relished every area of law I have practised in (even conveyancing), and as a result, I have found it difficult to work out which fork in the road leads to a dead end and which will lead me to my career home.

I did my articles at a small city law firm and before I was admitted, left to start up a general commercial practice with 2 others. At the tender age of 26, I was formally invited to join the partnership. My Wills and Succession students have heard me reference the legal documentary (aka an Australian comedy) 'The Castle' on many occasions.

My affinity with Dennis Denuto, as he dictates his letters then dons a headset to transcribe them, is born

out of those early days at Frenkel Partners - when we blue-tacked an A4 paper sign to the front door to indicate we were open for business, and shared receptionist, secretarial, research, clerking and cleaning duties, 7 days a week, 15 hours a day. Oh, and we built a successful general law practice (which continues to this day), practising in business law, commercial litigation, property, and wills and estates - basically everything except criminal and family law.

But, there came a time when the pull to have children became too great. I made the personal decision to resign from the partnership and replace deadlines with bedtimes, negotiating settlements with cajoling pre-schoolers into getting dressed, drafting documents with devising meal plans, and analysing cases with reading 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. All the while singing along to The Wiggles' 'Toot tootchugga-chugga Big Red Car' (embarrassingly, even when the children weren't with me!).

Over the years that followed, I dabbled in a few business opportunities to 'keep a hand in it', but it wasn't until my youngest of four children started kinder that I overhauled my legal career. An opportunity came up to work exclusively in succession planning, collaborating with accountants and financial advisers to deliver specialist estate planning, business succession and asset protection strategies for clients. I found my passion, and as Sheryl Sandberg would espouse, I 'leaned into' it with gusto.

***“ I often take on too much, and find it difficult to say no. I frequently feel guilty about spreading myself too thinly. I need to remind myself that I am doing my best, and that’s all anyone can ask of me. ”***

Key to constantly developing my expertise in this area is making myself that little bit uncomfortable. Saying yes to the very thing that gives me butterflies just thinking about because it challenges me to extend myself beyond my comfort zone (like when I first started lecturing, for example). Embracing opportunities that force me to paddle like crazy beneath the surface to deliver to my usual high standards, yet having faith that my underlying skills and experience will ensure I succeed.

There’s no doubt that keeping so many balls in the air without dropping any (correction, without dropping too many) is not effortless. Sleep is overrated (or so people tell me) and I routinely get up at 5am to squeeze a couple of hours work in before the kids rise. I outsource what I can. I recently engaged a cleaner once a fortnight, and have a few ready-made meals in the freezer for when I just haven’t had time to make a batch of bolognese sauce over the weekend, and the kids have eaten 2 minute noodles or breakfast cereal for dinner three nights in a row. I am also very blessed to have a wonderful husband and to be part of a “village” of strong and amazing women, who share the school run, and are only a phone call away when I just can’t meet that deadline with my children bickering in the background about whose turn it is to pick up the dog’s poos or unpack the dishwasher.

I am working on the art of forgiving myself when I stuff

up. Occasionally I won’t meet that deadline, or I’ll forget to ring a friend on her birthday. I often take on too much, and find it difficult to say no. I frequently feel guilty about spreading myself too thinly. I need to remind myself that I am doing my best, and that’s all anyone can ask of me.

I am very fortunate to have found my work family in View Legal. I enjoy the flexibility of working from home, but have the support of an awesome group of like-minded colleagues, with a ‘new law’ innovative outlook and a common goal – to be the firm their friends would choose.

All of this enables me to share as much of the important stuff with my family as I can – whether that be enjoying a meal together, being the parent helper on my 9 year old’s excursion to the Botanic Gardens, cheering on my 11 year old at the House cross country, working through that maths homework with my 12 year old, or giving my 14 year old a hug when she has been de-friended on Instagram by the cool group at school.

And sometimes, though probably not as regularly as I should, I do something just for me – like go for a long run, snuggle up in front of a romantic movie, or share a couple of glasses of wine and a laugh with a group of friends. Where there’s a will, there’s a way to find a workable (even if it’s a less than perfect) balance.

By Sophie Cohen



## Where Volunteering Can Take You

I graduated from Monash University with a LLB in November 2011. I then completed my Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice with Leo Cussen Centre for Law and was admitted to practice in August 2012.

Being an international student, I was not able to obtain employment or a graduate position until I got my permanent residency in early 2013. During that period, I started volunteering at Monash-Oakleigh Legal Service's Family Law Assistance Program as a volunteer solicitor. The volunteering experience has given me opportunities to conduct family law casework and to provide duty lawyer services at the Federal Circuit Court at the Dandenong registry on a weekly basis, which set a solid foundation for my future career in the legal profession.

With the experience that I gained through Monash-Oakleigh Legal Service, I later got my first job at Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) as a Legal Help Lawyer, providing legal information, advice, triage and referrals for legal aid clients. I have found that Legal Help is a great place for junior lawyers to get experience in all areas of law.

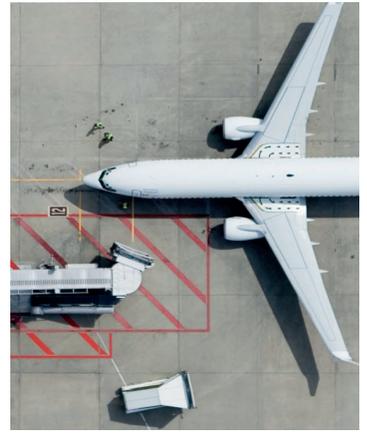
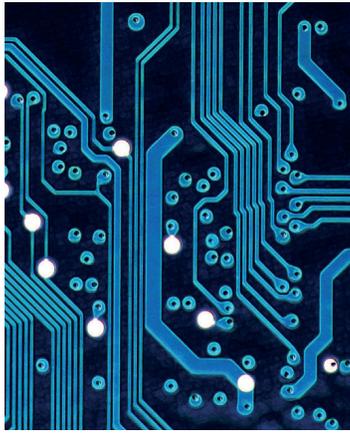
In April 2016, I was seconded by VLA to the Hume Riverina Community Legal Service as a Family Lawyer. The regional experience was invaluable as I had to deal with complex cross-border and cross-jurisdictional issues.

The experience in regional Victoria also reminded me of the importance to maintain a good relationship with local practitioners and other stakeholders including police and social services in order to provide holistic service to legal aid clients.

In March 2017, I returned to Melbourne and am currently a Family Lawyer with the VLA Melbourne office. This role provides me with lots of challenging responsibilities including providing duty lawyer service at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court in intervention order matters and at the Family Law Courts at Melbourne in family law matters.

My experience so far has exposed me to a variety of situations. In law school you imagine what practice is like, but the real day to day life experience is so much better than that. I am a strong advocate for volunteering. This experience is invaluable and will stay with you throughout your career. If you get the opportunity I also implore you to practice in a regional area. As a practitioner in regional Victoria I was able to assist clients in a different way to metropolitan Victoria as there are differing needs, expectations and resources. This was a highly worthwhile experience.

Gary Lung  
Family Lawyer  
Parenting Disputes, Family Law Services  
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# The Ins and Outs of Baker McKenzie

## Why Baker McKenzie?

I joined Baker McKenzie as a Graduate in March 2015, having undertaken a Seasonal Clerkship in December 2013 and then returning to work as a Research Clerk from March to June 2014.

As someone who has always been interested in international law, Bakers seemed a natural fit for me and my experiences with the Firm in the above roles confirmed as much. From the outset, I was exposed to a variety of engaging and challenging commercial work concerning clients and matters from all over the globe and was given an opportunity to work directly with some of the sharpest minds in the legal industry.

## Graduate Rotations - It's All About "Hands On" Experience

At Bakers, graduates undertake three rotations of four months each. I began my first rotation in the Corporate Markets group, working largely on private mergers and acquisitions. Almost immediately, I was thrust into a number of major commercial transactions and benefited from working directly with Partners and Senior Associates. I was given a large degree of responsibility and found myself sending emails directly to clients, or having one-on-one discussions with them. I relished the opportunity to develop and advance my practical and technical legal skills in a high quality work environment.

My second rotation was in the Energy, Resources, Infrastructure and Corporate group (ERIC), which again involved working mostly on private M&A deals but this time with an industry specific focus. The bulk of my rotation was spent on a major infrastructure

deal where the Firm acted for a foreign institutional investor who was part of a consortium that successfully bid for the TransGrid assets from the NSW government. I was able to build on the skills that I had developed working in the Corporate group and apply those same skills in the context of a major government infrastructure privatisation. I have recently begun my third and final rotation in the Dispute Resolution team - and have already attended Court and client meetings! I am really looking forward to developing some new skills working in a litigious environment.

## Unique Opportunities to Develop

One of the best aspects of being a junior lawyer at Baker McKenzie is the approach the Firm takes in relation to your career development. A particular highlight of the graduate program is attending a 'Corporate Intensive' and 'Dispute Resolution Intensive' with the Sydney graduates. This involved travelling to Sydney twice, each for a two day period, to undertake legal and practical training in relation to Dispute Resolution or Corporate matters. Not only was this extremely useful for developing my legal skills, it also provided an excellent opportunity to get to know the Sydney graduates as well as the Sydney lawyers in the relevant teams - especially during the many social events held during the intensives!

## My experience to date

My experience as a Graduate at Baker McKenzie has been phenomenal thus far. When I look back on all that I have done and learnt over the past 12 months, I really do have to pinch myself. I look forward to continuing my legal career at Bakers and can't wait to see what the future holds.

Otis David  
General Associate

# The Ashurst Graduate Experience

I began working with Ashurst as a summer clerk in December 2014. At the time I was in the penultimate year of my law/arts double degree. I have recently settled in Dispute Resolution (DR) following my Graduate Programme.

I joined the Ashurst Graduate Programme in February 2016. Before commencing rotations, we went to Sydney for the National Graduate Induction where we met all the Ashurst graduates from offices around Australia. The induction involved training in both legal and professional skills, and was the first part of the development program that continued throughout the year. My first rotation was in the Infrastructure team and primarily involved contract negotiation and drafting. As a graduate, it was exciting to see what was considered important by the various parties who were coming together to build a big piece of infrastructure such as a road or a railway, and how their various interests were balanced in a final contract.

I was in Dispute Resolution for my second rotation. This rotation primarily involved legal research and writing memoranda as well as document analysis. I was involved in a range of matters from large commercial litigation, to assisting clients in internal investigations involving bribery and corruption. We also attended a 'litigation masterclass' which was a two day seminar that provided a great foundation in court processes and mediation.

My third and final rotation was in Employment. I had the opportunity to draft submissions, go on site visits, conduct witness interviews and attend meetings with counsel. I even instructed at the Fair Work Commission and appeared at VCAT. As for any graduate in a litigious group, my day-to-day also involved many trips to court and the print room!

As a graduate I also completed my Practical Legal Training, which was funded by Ashurst. We were well supported throughout the program and were given study leave to prepare assignments throughout the year.

Graduates were also given the opportunity to spend a day at Youthlaw, a community legal service which assists homeless youth. This day was spent shadowing Ashurst's permanent secondee to Youthlaw, and was a fantastic experience that complimented my involvement in several pro bono matters throughout the year. Other time spent outside the office has included being a member of the Women's Networking Committee, travelling to Canberra to take part in a moot, playing netball at the Winneke Cup, basketball at Corporate Games and futsal on a weekly Ashurst team. The graduates also organised a winery tour and a weekend retreat, both of which were a lot of fun.

## My tips:

While applying for clerkships and graduate jobs can be quite a daunting task, I would recommend the following for making the process easier:

- Go along to the career events and meet the lawyers. This will help you get an idea about what firm culture is like and whether you're interested in the type of work the firm practices in.
- Try not to compare yourself to others going through the clerkship process. Everyone's experience will be different. It's about finding the right place for you, not landing the most clerkship offers.
- Bring enthusiasm and a positive attitude to the process. The clerkship process, and indeed the graduate rotations, are a great opportunity to 'try out a firm'. While not every task every day will be exciting, the best work and opportunities will come to those who show they are positive and reliable.

Rebecca, Lawyer (Bachelor of Laws (Hons) / Bachelor of Arts)



## Advice from 2015's Female Young Gun of the Year

I began my legal career in my final semester at university as a paralegal at a national mid-tier commercial law firm. I'm currently a Senior Associate in the Workplace Relations Team at Moray & Agnew Lawyers. My first few years in legal practice provided the sharpest learning curve I've ever experienced. These are a few of the lessons I learnt along the way.

### 1. **Build your network**

As a final year law student, I joined the association Victorian Women Lawyers in order to gain some insight into life in legal practice. Having recently taken and fallen in love with the subject 'Employment Law', I asked the then-Convenor if she could put me in touch with a practitioner in that area, which she generously did. This resulted in my first job in the law.

As the number of clerkships and graduate positions tightens, it is increasingly important to tap into the network of professionals who may be able to point you in the right direction or give you first access to opportunities as they arise. Even later in your career, you'll find that lawyers often hear about new opportunities through people within their network. Networks will also be important in building your client base and advancing your career.

In a similar vein, professional associations provide a valuable opportunity to develop skills (including through participation on committees and boards), a sense of professional identity, and lend credibility to your public profile as a junior lawyer. A number of associations provide opportunities to students to be involved in varying capacities, including through committee roles and mentoring programs.

### 2. **Ask for advice**

From your CV, to your interviewing skills, to your career path...ask for advice and feedback, and use it constructively

to refine your approach. Many professionals will be flattered by your request and few are likely to say no.

### 3. **Value yourself**

It is important not to understate your life experience. As a graduate lawyer, there are of course typical selection criteria such as academics results and professional experience. In addition to these standards, think about your unique selling points and have confidence that you bring unique experiences and skill sets to the table. For instance, I worked in music promotions when I was a student at university. The process of promoting a music event is remarkably similar to selling your services as a lawyer. A critical component is building relationships. A discerning employer should see the value of your diverse experiences and skills. Certainly, in reviewing clerkship applications for a firm I worked with previously, I was pleased to see they gave equal weight to academic results, legal experience and extracurricular interests demonstrating an interest in well-rounded and vibrant applicants.

### 4. **Be resilient**

Everyone will experience job rejection at some point. It is not personal. It should not deter you from pursuing your career objectives. We have all been there and will be again. For this reason, it's important to be resilient and shake off the disappointment of an unsuccessful job application. Starting your career should be an exciting, challenging time in which you assess your particular skills and capabilities, and determine the course of your professional career. If it turns out that the law is not for you, you will be in good company. Many very successful business people used their law degrees as a jumping board to greater heights. Enjoy the journey!

Elizabeth Aitken  
Senior Associate  
Moray & Agnew Lawyers

## Working at Lander & Rogers

I clerked at a number of top and mid-tier firms, but chose Landers for its people and clients. I'm so glad that I did. Life over the past year has been fast paced, challenging and a whole lot of fun. I've made lifelong friends, been mentored by industry leaders and learnt more in one year than I did over six years at university. Clichéd? Maybe, but that's what you have to look forward to!

I officially started at Landers in March 2016, and soon learnt that what I'd got myself in for was going to be far more than just a job. My fellow grads and I spent the first week undertaking training on everything from file management to leadership to how to host the AFL grand final drinks - a responsibility that came second only to our graduate revue performance at the Christmas Party!

It was then on to real work! At Landers, graduates undertake four rotations of three months duration. My first was in the General Insurance group, working on medical negligence claims, professional indemnity matters and complex product recalls that I was reading about in the newspapers. Straight away, I was handed responsibility and made to feel like my contribution mattered. I attended witness interviews, researched complex areas of law and drafted advices that went out to real clients! With the support of my buddy and supervisor, I never felt out of my depth or like I had too much or too little work.

My second rotation was spent in the Property, Projects and Infrastructure group. I was given my own commercial leasing files and responsible for following up clients and the otherside directly.

I was also given the opportunity to work on the biggest commercial property transaction in Melbourne in 2016 - the sale of the Southgate complex on Southbank for almost \$500 million.

By the time I got to my third rotation - Family & Relationship Law - Landers was beginning to feel like home. I couldn't walk in to a lift or buy a coffee without running in to someone who wanted to hear which group I'd recently rotated into, or where I was going next. People here are not just friendly, but genuinely interested in your development and want you to succeed.

My fourth rotation has been in the Corporate group, building on the skills I've learnt over the past year. While I've worked on multimillion dollar sponsorship agreements for some of Australia's biggest sporting organisations, complex superannuation matters and private M&A deals, I've also been involved in some really rewarding pro bono matters, too.

However, the past year hasn't been all about work. I've had time to regularly catch up with friends, train for two half marathons and made it out of Melbourne to go skiing, to the beach or to the country almost every second weekend.

I'm now about to complete the graduate program and I can't wait to continue my career at Landers as a first year lawyer. It's a great place to work!

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Sarah Harkin  
Lawyer (2016 Graduate Program)

Lander & Rogers  
Lawyers

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## Go Your Own Way

I started an arts degree at Monash University in 2005 and took up law in 2008. I graduated midway through 2010, some 2 years after the global financial crisis. My passion was always in social justice, ethics and the environment, but it was a hard time for graduates as many opportunities in legal practice evaporated. After months of long days as a para-legal, a long commute, and additional hours of study when I got home, I was offered a position at Baker & McKenzie. It was a great firm by any standard: quality legal work, and a solid commitment to pro-bono and community work. I accepted the pragmatic advice around me, and opted for a “solid grounding in commercial and business law” that “would stand me in good stead”. The highlight of my time there was joining the climate change and environmental practice group.

In 2014, after the Carbon Price Mechanism was disbanded I elected to take a break from legal practice and I took off to New York to pursue a Master’s degree at New York University. In New York I completed a thesis on the emerging science and thinking of a new ‘whole of Earth system’ approach to the ecological crisis and became involved in a UN program called Harmony with Nature. The program evolved from political changes, largely in South America, where several countries elected to change their constitution and award “rights” to nature. It was an exciting time to be involved in pioneering a new movement of legal thinking.

After my work in New York and increasing understanding of the environmental crisis, I gained a renewed awareness of and commitment to the role of law in society, and the role of lawyers within that system. My conception of ethical lawyering is not merely to a client’s interests in the adversarial process, but a broader duty of doing justice, which means getting to the truth. The legal system should first and foremost protect the ecological system on which we all rely. In 2016 a group of us started Lawyers for a New Paradigm. It was the perfect antidote to the politics of fear, and xenophobia playing out internationally.

We are lawyers and policy makers committed to a new conversation on environmental issues and social justice, and practicing new kinds of lawyering that generates solutions, creates connection and community, and ultimately supports the change to an ecological future.

I believe the law has a critical role to play to achieve this end. The idea of striking a balance between the environment, the economy and society is outmoded. Ecological stability needs to be established first. Without a stable ecological base, social justice, and a great economy will not be made possible. Legal culture has a long way to go to achieve equality, inclusion and thrive as a professional pathway where the health and well-being of practitioners is not an afterthought. The prospect of change is immensely exciting and only mildly daunting! It’s a good time for any young person to consider how the world around us is transforming and the many career paths that a law degree can take you.

My pathway to law began with a passion for trying to understand the world around me and thinking about where I could best place my energy to contribute to positive change. On reflection I have taken the winding road in my professional life so far, not just the path of convenience. I have asked hard questions and ultimately made decisions based on what I think is right, and what makes me happy.

The main thing I would care to impart on the next generation of lawyers is be ready for anything. Take regular breaks and give yourself time out to reflect and ask the hard questions. Avoid the mentality that to survive you must compete - genuine teamwork is a beautiful thing. Surround yourself with people who love and support you. Don’t forget the bigger picture!

Laura Ballantyne-Brodie  
Lawyer



## Getting A Head Start

As law students, it can often be difficult to apply what we learn in lectures to the outside world. Hands-on experience is of course valuable to any student, as it can enhance our study and give us a better idea of what we're getting ourselves into in the long run.

While studying part-time, I am fortunate enough to be employed at the Supreme Court of Victorian the Court of Appeal division. I find this to be a fascinating role and, while sometimes challenging, the content is always interesting. Since commencing the Juris Doctor, I've found that it yields another benefit: a deeper understanding of the law as a field of study.

Working within the legal system allows me to see first-hand how the law operates in its enforcement by observing cases or reading case files, and I frequently have the opportunity to see cases prosecuted and defended in different ways. Being a part of a Court that frequently sees Judges create or change law is also particularly rewarding. It has also allowed me to see that career opportunities for graduates are not limited to practicing in a private firm.

The Court employs lawyers for changes in policy (such as procedural rules), to manage complex cases from start to finish, or to personally assist a Judge. It also helps to focus my ambitions for the future, and how I can reach them through study. A career in the legal field is also an excellent opportunity to network. While some events give you a fleeting chance to impress your potential employer, working side-by-side with those in the profession gives you a great opportunity to meet other contacts and see the type of lawyer you'd like to be in the future. If you're lucky, they may also be willing to proof-read assignments.

Ultimately, my employment in the Court continues to benefit me in my studies, and vice versa. I would encourage everyone to seek employment in the legal system if possible, even before practicing as a lawyer. Whether it is working full time, volunteering, or even observing, the Courts provide an excellent avenue to see how the legal system operates in Victoria.

Declan Holmes  
2nd year Juris Doctor student  
Registry Officer, Court of Appeal

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# Firm Profiles



### Our strengths

As a global law firm with a rich history spanning almost 200 years, we've established ourselves as a leading adviser to corporates, financial institutions and governments, on all areas of the law including finance, M&A, disputes and competition.

We're renowned for helping our clients navigate through a complex and constantly evolving global landscape. With 25 offices across the world's leading financial and resource centres, we offer the reach and insight of a global network combined with deep local market knowledge.

### Our values

- Collaboration
- Excellence
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Accountability

### What qualities do you look for in a clerk?

There's absolutely no Ashurst "type". We want to actively involved a broad range of minds with a broad range of backgrounds, all united by a common set of strengths.

- Excellent academic record and a passion to develop a career in an elite international law firm
- Outstanding communication skills
- Analytical ability, motivation, determination and drive
- Teamwork and interpersonal skills

### What is the firm's approach to pro bono work?

Corporate responsibility (CR) at Ashurst encompasses our community involvement, place-to-work and environmental initiatives. Pro bono is considered a stand-alone legal practice and we regard pro bono legal work as an integral part of our professional responsibility. Both the CR program and pro bono practice are led by a full-time partner.

### What other opportunities does the firm offer?

As an international law firm, there is an opportunity to apply for an international rotation in one of our Asian offices as a part of the graduate programme.

### How many clerks does the firm usually take?

Across Australia we typically take 120 - 130 seasonal clerks.

### What sort of work can a clerk expect to perform?

Want to know exactly what our work is like? For many of our future graduates, that variety of experience begins with a seasonal clerkship, which will give you an intensive insight into life at Ashurst. The aim of our clerkships is to expose you to as much real work as possible, to help you make an informed decision about whether this is the right firm (and career) for you.

For that reason, we'll allocate you a supervisor and a buddy who can explain their work to you, include you in meetings and conference calls, and give you tasks to tackle. Depending on the office you join, you'll spend time in either one or two practice areas.

At Baker McKenzie we are different in the way we think, work and behave. Like no other firm, we were born global. Founded in 1949, Baker McKenzie is one of the world's largest law firms by markets, revenue and headcount. We offer our clients and lawyers an uncompromising commitment to excellence and a distinctive way of thinking, working and behaving - as a passionately global and genuinely collaborative firm.

We understand the challenges of the global economy, because we have been a global law firm from the start.

### Our Clerkship Program

Right from the start, our Seasonal Clerks get involved in real work. You will be exposed to our Australian and international clients through client meetings, shadowing, research and other everyday activities within your assigned practice group. Our Seasonal Clerks work closely with other lawyers, are guided by a supervising Partner and enjoy the extra support of an experienced Associate "buddy". You will develop practical and legal skills through our national learning program and by attending workshops specifically designed for clerks, as well as Firm-wide sessions.

### Develop globally

At Baker McKenzie, we have a deep commitment to development. We work with each Graduate to create a tailored development plan and career goals. To help you reach your goals, we provide targeted learning opportunities - from seminars on core legal topics to practical skills development in areas such as communication, drafting and presenting.

We work hard to facilitate on-the-job learning and the many ways it happens - through informal mentoring relationships, client secondments, involving Graduates in global teams working on international deals or supporting them to run their own files in our award-winning Pro Bono Program. We bring Graduates from our Australian offices together for training and conferences, to help foster networks across the Firm. We also support professional development by covering the costs of practical legal training.

Our regional practice group structure means that many of our lawyers attend regional training in our Asia Pacific offices and, once graduates complete their Graduate Program, we send them overseas to attend a regional orientation program with other mid-level Associates across the region.

### How to apply

Applications for clerkships can be submitted online via [www.bakermckenzie.com/careers/australia/melbourne](http://www.bakermckenzie.com/careers/australia/melbourne)

Applications open on 10 July 2017 and close at 11:59 pm on 13 August 2017.

### Josh Crook

Talent Management Consultant - Melbourne  
Tel: +61 3 9617 4351  
[josh.crook@bakermckenzie.com](mailto:josh.crook@bakermckenzie.com)



### **Describe the firms prominent practice areas.**

Our most prominent practice areas are in industry sectors where we have deep experience, high levels of expertise, and blue chip clients.

#### **These practice areas include:**

- Aged Care and Retirement Living
- Health
- Community Services
- Local Government
- State Government
- Water
- Property and Development

### **How many clerks does the firm usually take?**

Approximately 25 to 30 clerks.

### **What qualities do you look for in a clerk?**

Naturally a sound academic record is an important, however we also look for other attributes such as extra-curricular interests and life experiences outside of your studies. These may include previous work experience, volunteer work, travel, sporting or cultural interests. We like to see that you have done some prior research about Russell Kennedy, the type of work we are actively involved in and can clearly explain why you would like to work here. We also want to see that you are able to balance your work and study with other interests.

### **What sort of work can a clerk expect to perform?**

Our Seasonal Clerkship Program is designed to give you a real taste of life at Russell Kennedy. Our clerks will be doing real work such as drafting correspondence, assisting with research, attending court and participating in client meetings. Clerks will also be able to attend our in-house seminars for professional development and spend time with our current Law Graduates to learn about their experiences, challenges and triumphs.

### **What is the firm's approach to pro bono work?**

Russell Kennedy lawyers perform in traditional pro bono legal services and many of our staff also volunteer their time with committees, boards and various community-focused roles.

Russell Kennedy has been a signatory to the Australian Pro Bono Centre's Aspirational Target since 2011 and have proudly exceeded the target in past years. In fact, in the 2015/16 financial year, Russell Kennedy lawyers completed over 4,000 hours of pro bono legal services.

### **What other opportunities does the firm offer?**

The Russell Kennedy Women's Network is an initiative of Russell Kennedy designed to grow our businesses through the connection of women. Additionally, there are also opportunities for graduates who would like to be involved on a project-by-project basis. Graduates are also encouraged to become an active member of the Innovation committee and the Pro Bono committee.

# Lander & Rogers

## Lawyers

### **About Lander & Rogers**

Lander & Rogers is a leading independent Australian law firm operating nationally from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. We are proud to be the trusted advisor to many publicly listed and private Australian companies, Australian subsidiaries of global companies as well as all levels of government.

We have seven areas of practice, and we cover a range of industry sectors, with a focus on financial services, insurance, government, infrastructure, real estate, and retail and supply chain.

We believe that legal services are much more than just the law - they are about great people, sustained excellence and exceptional client service. We have a reputation in the legal market as a provider of premium legal services, and as a sought after employer. We are renowned in Australia for our down-to-earth and friendly workplace culture.

### **Our practice areas**

The firm's legal services are multi-disciplinary in nature and cover Corporate, Commercial Disputes, Compensation Law, Family & Relationship Law, Insurance Law & Litigation, Property, Projects & Infrastructure and Workplace Relations & Safety.

### **What distinguishes us from other firms?**

We care about our people and about building a great culture. Unlike a lot of law firms, we believe you can produce great work and still have fun while you're doing it.

We have a distinctively happy workplace, achieved through selectively recruiting people who think and act collaboratively and will strengthen our culture.

The firm comprises 61 partners and approximately 400 lawyers, support and business services staff. We have grown organically, resulting in a highly cohesive firm sharing a strong work and services ethic, and high staff and partner retention rates.

As a medium sized firm, we're big enough to attract great clients with fantastic work; but small enough to be focused on the important things like learning and development, opportunities for our people to progress, mentoring our junior lawyers and maintaining a happy workplace.

### **Seasonal Clerk opportunities**

We recruit approximately 20-25 law students to join us for four weeks during one of our clerkship intakes in Nov/Dec, Jan/Feb or June/July.

To find out more about our clerkship recruitment process or our program, please visit [www.landerson.com.au/graduates](http://www.landerson.com.au/graduates) or contact Laura Grant, Graduate Resourcing Consultant.



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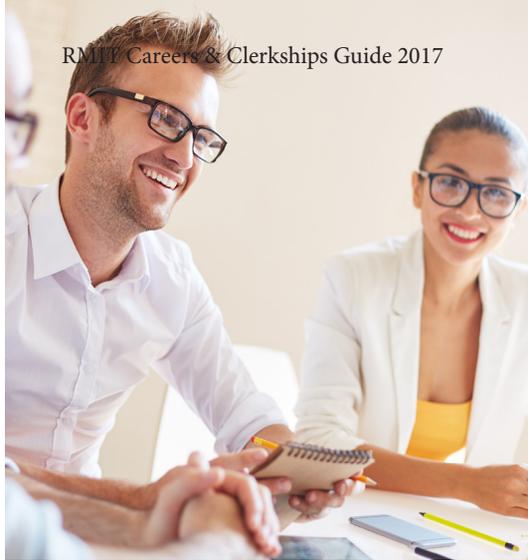
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**Russell Kennedy**  
Lawyers



**Be inspired. Be your best.  
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**As a lawyer starting out your legal career, you want to make an impact as soon as possible.**

**At Russell Kennedy, you'll have that opportunity.**

**From day one, you'll be paired up with a senior mentor.**

**You will have the opportunity to do meaningful work in sectors that matter.**

To succeed, you'll need to be hungry to learn and grow.

You'll also need to share our commitment to our clients, our community and to each other.

In return, we'll support and inspire you to build an exciting legal career where you get to make a difference.

## **Russell Kennedy's Sectors of Focus**

**Aged Care and Retirement Living**

**Banking and Finance**

**Business Services**

**Health**

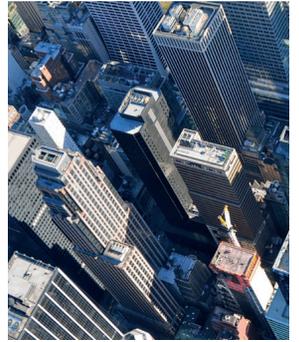
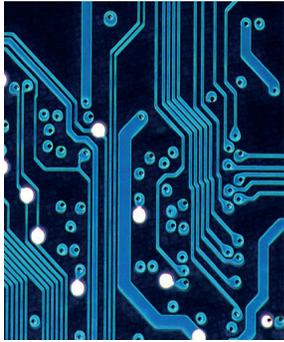
**Insurance**

**Local Government and Water**

**Not-for-Profit**

**Property Development**

**State and Federal Government**



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If you want to make the most of your career in law, our global network is the perfect place to start. Our worldwide capabilities give us access to the most interesting markets, the most exciting clients and the most significant and complex transactions. For you, this means the chance to work on market-leading deals with some of the most experienced and talented lawyers in our industry, together with access to international secondment opportunities from early in your career.

### CLERKSHIP PROGRAM

Come and explore a career with us by applying for one of our clerkships. Our clerkships offer ambitious penultimate-year law students an insight into the workings of a large corporate law firm, and offer an exceptional opportunity to experience our work, people and culture.

Anything is possible with us – provided you are willing to work hard and are committed to achieve whatever you put your mind to.

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**Our goal is simple. We want to create the future leaders of the firm.**

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# IT ALL STARTS HERE

## About MinterEllison

At MinterEllison our aspiration is to be our clients' best partner. Our large, diverse client base includes public and private companies, leading multinationals operating in the region, global financial institutions, and government and state-owned entities.

We think beyond the law and apply a commercial approach and creative thinking to some of the region's most high-profile transactions, projects and disputes. We draw on the extensive capability of our own office network and relationships with other leading firms around the world to deliver seamless service to our clients wherever they need us.

## Office locations

Australia: Adelaide\*, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin\*, Gold Coast\*, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Asia: Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Ulaanbaatar

New Zealand: Auckland\*, Wellington\*

Europe: London

\*Associated offices that operate as members of The Minter Ellison Legal Group

## What does the firm look for in a clerk?

You should consider a career at MinterEllison if:

- Your passion for excellence leads you to winning solutions.
- You have what it takes to apply technical thinking through the prism of commercial advice.
- Building relationships excites you. You see yourself outside the office, working in partnership with clients.
- You think outside the box and embrace new ideas.
- You want to feel empowered and be part of a high performance team.
- Collaboration and inclusiveness are principles you value.
- The status quo bores you. You want to be part of something different.
- You're looking for a Firm with a clear game plan.

## Our Clerkship program

We typically take 60 clerks over two intakes – one in the summer and one in the winter. Our vacation clerkships offer you real-life work experience. A comprehensive orientation program and learning on the job will help you build your legal skills and commercial acumen.

During our program you will:

- work closely with partners and lawyers on active matters
- produce quality and meaningful work
- participate in tangible learning & development activities and
- attend social and networking events

You will also be allocated a supervisor for daily support who will help you manage your workload, and a 'buddy' for extra insight and advice.

## Growth program

At MinterEllison, your ongoing professional development is key to being our clients' best partner. We have a distinctive learning culture, where all of our people are encouraged to be their own career architect - learning through experience, exposure to others and program participation.

During your career with us you will be exposed to great work, with top-class clients whilst being surrounded by supportive teams who are experts in their fields. This experience and exposure provides you with fantastic opportunity to continue to develop yourself and others throughout your career.

## How to apply for a clerkship?

All clerkship applications should be submitted online via the careers section of our website.

- [www.graduates.minterellison.com](http://www.graduates.minterellison.com)

Make sure you visit our website well before applying, there are plenty of useful resources including a timeline of critical dates for your location, tips on writing your CV and Cover Letter, and a preparation guide for your interview!

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