

2025 CAREERS HANDBOOK



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THE BLACKSTONE SOCIETY'S

CAREERS HANDBOOK

2025



Foreword

**Eloquently Composed by
The Honourable Michael Buss**

President of the Supreme Court of Appeal of Western Australia

Each of you will soon make a transition from your current university education to another vocation. The completion of your studies will mark an ending and a beginning.

It is an ending in that it will mark the completion of many years of hard work, perseverance and success in the education system. You should be proud of what you have done. Your achievements reflect not only your personal endeavours, but also the support and encouragement of your family and friends. It is a beginning in that you will pursue a career, most likely in the legal, academic, government or business sphere. Every kind of legal work is of value and importance. None is intrinsically better or worse than others. This Careers Handbook will provide an insight into some of the many options available to you upon the completion of your law degree. I encourage you to explore a variety of opportunities and identify a pathway which you find challenging and interesting.

Work as a lawyer in any area of endeavour will bring status and financial reward. However, it is not sufficient for a lawyer merely to comply with the general law. A lawyer must be committed to standards of behaviour based upon ethics and best practice. In particular, a lawyer who practises in the legal profession participates in the administration of justice according to law; the courts rely upon lawyers in discharging the courts function; and clients repose trust and confidence in their lawyers. A lawyer must carry out their work with honesty and integrity. That requires moral or ethical strength. Legal ethics are prescribed to a significant extent by professional and statutory rules, contractual terms, tortious duties and fiduciary obligations. However, actual and potential ethical problems for lawyers arise in a multitude of different factual and legal circumstances. Their resolution can sometimes be difficult. The lawyer may need their sense of honesty and integrity and their understanding of the role and function of a lawyer to analyse and resolve the problem. A lawyer must do what is right and proper, in the circumstances, irrespective of the consequences.

The work of a lawyer requires skill and diligence. This includes knowledge of legal principles and their application in a practical context. The work of a lawyer demands constant learning. Some learning is experiential. As with life generally, not everything can be learned from a book or by tuition. There is no substitute for experience. If you are genuinely interested in the law, and enjoy understanding it, both in theory and in practice, you will have a real sense of satisfaction in your work.

These ideals may sound daunting, but do not be discouraged. Strive to do your best. Take heart from what you do well and learn from what you do less well. Do not set too high a benchmark for yourself. Be realistic about what you can do and what you can achieve at particular stages of your career. Ask for help, guidance or reassurance from more senior and experienced lawyers if you are uncertain or unsure about how to proceed or what should be done. Most senior and experienced lawyers will happily provide assistance to more junior and less experienced colleagues. The legal profession is a collegiate body. Participating in social, continuing legal education, pro bono and other activities with other lawyers, including in the context of professional associations, will be personally beneficial to you and others, and will reinforce and renew the profession and its work.

It is important to make time for pleasure and fulfilment outside the law. Work and the law are not everything. Family and friendships give life its true meaning. Maintain existing friendships with lawyers and non-lawyers and develop new friendships. Maintain existing interests outside the law and develop new interests.

I congratulate you on reaching this stage in your current university education and wish you success and happiness in your chosen career.

Welcome

by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer

I would like to thank the Blackstone Society for inviting HSF Kramer to write a welcome to its fellow members and students as they look forward to their legal career. On behalf of the firm, it is a great opportunity to once again, be the major sponsor of the Careers Handbook – a trusted resource for many of you navigating the application process for graduate positions. Looking for a job can often be a job in and of itself. Coupled with university assignments, and work commitments, the process can at times be overwhelming. It is great to see a student organisation like Blackstone, dedicate time and resources to putting together a comprehensive guide to make this process easier. So a huge congratulations to the team for once again, creating such a valued resource, that I'm sure will be relied upon by many as they embark on the next stage of their career.

It seems like a long time ago that I was walking through the hallways of UWA with very little idea of what life at a big commercial firm would be like or whether it was for me. The truth is – it's very hard to gauge a good sense of what happens inside a law firm (or most other workplaces) until you are well and truly in the thick of it!

So how did I end up in the law? Strangely, from early primary school I thought that I wanted to be a lawyer. I'm not sure why, given at that stage in life, I had probably not even met a lawyer! However, now having had the opportunity and the privilege to work with some terrific lawyers - in terms of being great at their job but also being committed to their colleagues and the broader profession, I can say with utmost certainty that you have so much to look forward to. Regardless of the sector you work in, you will be surrounded by some of the best minds, with a shared respect for the rule of law and a mutual commitment to deliver the best outcomes for clients, and in turn the wider community. It is also an incredibly varied profession – the variety of which I didn't appreciate until I started work. There is so much to choose from, and sometimes overwhelmingly so (I know from experience, having completed four rotations as a junior lawyer before making the decision about what I wanted to do long term).

In my role as Partner and former President of the Law Society of WA, I often get to meet and work with graduates and junior lawyers across the profession. It never ceases to amaze me the varied life





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experiences, hobbies, backgrounds that students come from that shape their perspectives and desires to use their law degree in a way that suits their interests and skills. There really is no “correct” path and you should be encouraged to lean in on the unique perspective that you bring. Always remember that the profession is stronger because of its increasing diversity. Regardless of the path you choose, there are a couple of things that would be helpful to keep in mind.

The first is to have an enquiring mind – in the early stages of your career, you may find that you have lots of questions. Juniors sometimes feel reluctant to ask these questions. However, questions are often the best way to learn and you’ll often find that people appreciate the curiosity. Keep this in mind not only in the early stages of your career, but also as you progress and have the opportunity to cultivate a safe space for juniors who work for you to give things a go and ask their own questions.

The second is to be flexible and adaptable – a career is never without its challenges, often the most rewarding moments are borne from the most challenging of times – though this is not always obvious at the time! The ability to embrace and work through such occasions is a skill that I continue to work on and would encourage you to do the same.

Lastly, and in many ways the most critical, be kind and respectful to yourself and to others. Prioritising your wellbeing is crucial to having a substantiable and longstanding career. Being ambitious is not synonymous to having no boundaries. So make sure you make time for yourself, including the things you enjoy and help you to recharge.

I wish you all the best and look forward to welcoming you to the profession!

Ante Golem

Partner, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer



Acknowledgements

Careers Vice-President: Daniel Toluwade

Marketing Vice-President: Lina Das

Careers Sub-Committee: Emma He, Saoirse Torr, Anton Abrossimov, Ashleigh Duffin, Angela Perry

Marketing Sub-Committee: Rhianna Kara, Vishani Mehta, Anni Qian, Nurshamin Wan, Kate Ye

President: Callum Lindsay

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Contributors

The Hon Michael Buss, Ante Golem, Daniel Toluwade, Lina Das, Callum Lindsay, Lucas Starkie, Harley Gardiner, Natasha Catalano, Daniel Martinez, Karly Pisano, Harriet Whipp, Henry Cooney, Julia Symons, Dr Jacinta Dharmananda, Ben Tomasi, Arina Mundy, Samuel Dulyba, Ethan Ryan, Catinca Hozoc-Martin, Siena Casgrain, Kelsey Howen, Isabel Inkster, Tim Beckett and Jasper Johnson

Editorial

Daniel Toluwade, Careers Vice President

Lina Das, Marketing Vice President

Callum Lindsay, President

Welcome to the 2025 Blackstone Careers Handbook, generously sponsored by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer!

Life After Law School can be many things: a great unknown, a defined path, or somewhere in between. Whether you're embarking on your Juris Doctor or Master of Legal Practice journey with a clear goal, or are still exploring your options, the road ahead can feel daunting. With such a wide range of career possibilities, it's not always easy to know where to begin. Addressing this is why we have created the 2025 Careers Handbook, a comprehensive resource designed to support you as you navigate the transition from study to professional life.

Within these pages, you'll find insights into a variety of legal and non-legal career pathways, shared by experienced professionals from across Western Australia. As every career journey is unique, we have included perspectives from the full spectrum of the legal profession: from large commercial firms and boutique practices, community legal centres, the judiciary, academia and beyond. In doing so, we aim to equip you with a well-rounded view of the avenues available to you after your law degree. Also featured are articles which offer a glimpse into different areas of the profession, including life as a graduate at a global law firm, a day in the life of a barrister, and what it's like to pursue a career in academia. These candid anecdotes are designed to both inform and inspire, drawing on the lived experience of those who have walked the path before you.

For those currently considering clerkships or graduate positions, the Handbook is an invaluable starting point. It offers guidance through each stage of the recruitment process, from submitting applications and attending interviews, to receiving offers and starting your career. You'll gain practical insight into the skills and qualities firms are looking for, and what distinguishes their cultures. As we recognise the growing interest in international careers, we have also included a helpful guide to admission pathways both in Australia and overseas. While we hope this Handbook offers both inspiration and reassurance, we also encourage you to take initiative in shaping your career. Use it as a springboard to explore further - connect with professionals, attend firm presentations, participate in Blackstone's career development events, and stay informed about industry trends.

This publication would not have been possible without the dedication and collaboration of many. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Blackstone Careers and Marketing portfolios for their outstanding efforts in putting this Handbook together. We are also deeply grateful to the many professionals, lawyers, and members of the judiciary who contributed their time and insights. A special thanks to the Hon Michael Buss for their generous contribution to the Foreword. And of course, we sincerely thank Herbert Smith Freehills for their ongoing support of the Blackstone Society, this Handbook, and UWA law students.

We hope you find the 2025 Blackstone Careers Handbook a valuable companion as you explore the many exciting directions your law degree can take you.

We wish you every success in your journey beyond law school.

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Careers Toolbox & Practice Group Insights

The Careers Toolbox is to assist you through application processes. The Blackstone Careers team have set out techniques for applications, writing cover letters and CVs, attending interviews, clerkships and graduate recruitment, and the important dates for 2025.

Various lawyers have also provided insights into their respective practice areas which will be useful for your career planning and applications.

We hope the Careers Toolbox is useful during the application process, as well as in the future. The Blackstone Careers team has organised a variety of Careers Presentations during Semester One to supplement the information provided here.

If you have any questions throughout the year, please do not hesitate to ask a Blackstone Committee member.

CLERKSHIPS

What is a clerkship?

A clerkship is an employment experience in a law firm or government department over the summer or winter university breaks. They tend to run for between two to four weeks and are generally paid.

Clerkships provide students with an opportunity to gain an insight into what practical legal work is like and hopefully, find the working environment that suits them best. Students are given the chance to see how one works and operates in a professional environment. Firms will often offer graduate positions to high performers. Exposure to a variety of firms helps you to decide the career path you wish to pursue.

Clerkships are regarded as important because many of the large international and national firms tend to only hire graduates that have completed a clerkship with them. However, it is also critical to note that completing a clerkship does not guarantee a graduate position at the firm.

Clerkships can give you an insight into the areas of law that do and do not interest you. Some students may even realise that practicing law isn't for them after completing a clerkship, which shouldn't be alarming as a law degree provides students with so many other opportunities. Completing a clerkship will still give students invaluable real-life experience and skills that will help them regardless of which career path they pursue.

It is open to all students to apply for clerkships (depending on the firm). However, preference is generally given to those students in their

penultimate year of study.

If you are a non-penultimate year student, be sure to explain why you did not apply in your penultimate year or why you are applying early. Spend some time and do your research in order to determine which firms would be best to apply for.

What to expect?

You will be given real work for real clients. You may be given tasks including sitting in on client meetings and taking notes for your supervisor, attending court, drafting correspondence, researching case law or legislation on complex issues and writing memorandums detailing your findings.

If you work for government departments, professional service firms or in other internships, your work will vary. Expect the work you are given to be quite different from what you have learnt at university and embrace it! Don't forget that a clerkship is also an opportunity for you to figure out whether you would want to start your professional career with that firm or in that area of law.

What is expected from you?

Firms do not expect their clerks to know everything. Firms will run a number of training workshops related to research skills, getting to know the firm's resources, letter writing and drafting memorandums. These exercises will provide you with useful tips and skills, which can be transferred into the remainder of your university studies and future careers.

It is important to be yourself! Firms want to see how you fit in their culture and whether they should invest more time and effort into you. Being yourself is also important for you to determine whether or not that firm is a place where you see yourself working and thriving.

It is also expected that you will work hard and put in effort to meet and get to know the staff. It is important that you are enthusiastic and keen to learn more about the firm, even though the work can sometimes be tedious or difficult. It is also important that you're professional and courteous (and that you handle yourself properly at Friday night drinks and social functions...).

Buddy System

A lot of firms have a buddy system in place, which means you will be paired with a younger employee, usually a graduate or junior lawyer. You will be partnered with them throughout your clerkship. Your buddy is there to help you with any questions you may have and to assist you when you need it. Don't be afraid to ask questions – your buddy was in your position not too long ago. Be sure to interact with your buddy and ask them to coffee if they don't ask first!

Social Gatherings

Clerkships aren't just about working! Many firms will organise social events which provide a good break from all stresses of work and socialise with the wider community of the firm. You are likely to attend at least one Friday night drinks in the duration of your clerkship. If your clerkship is in December, you will likely attend the firm Christmas party and if you're clerking in either January or June, the firm will likely host a sit-down dinner or celebration of sorts. It is important to make the most of these events. They are great opportunities to meet people from other practice groups in the firm and help you to get to know the firm

culture and determine whether you would be a good fit at the firm. BUT, it is important that you behave professionally at all social events, you do not want to be that clerk who was too intoxicated or inappropriate at a social event.

GENERAL TIPS

The Night Before

Make sure that you have set your alarm and held the train or bus timetables, you do not want to be late on the first day of your clerkship. Make sure you have an early night because you want to feel fresh and ready to go - first impressions count!

Dress Code

Most firms have a corporate attire dress code. This means suits including a tie or a mid-length dress or blouse with blazer and dress pants. Some firms don't require their staff to wear ties, but we recommend that you wear a tie on your first day. Be sure to bring a tie to work every day, just in case you need to go to court or a client meeting.

It is recommended that you bring a blazer with you every day in case you are required to attend a client meeting or court.

It is normal to feel nervous on your first day

Don't be! Remember that the firm was confident enough in your ability to choose you, so you should be as well! Your first day will usually consist of getting to know other clerks, familiarising yourself with the technology used by the firm, office tours and being introduced to your practice group.

CLERKSHIP OFFERS DAY

What happens on offers day?

Offers Day is a set date where clerkship offers are given for almost all firms, you will usually know well in advance what day that is. Usually, the time for offers is from 9 AM to 1 PM.

What to do on offers day?

First, make sure you have a list (mental or physical) of the firms you prefer and in which periods. Make sure you know what period each firm offers (Summer 1 (Nov – Dec), Summer 2 (Jan – Feb), and Winter (Jun – July)). You will usually be asked to give a ‘period preference’ either prior to or after your interview at a firm. Be sure to have alternatives and be flexible in case you don’t get a certain firm or period.

Second, it is advisable that you wake up early on the day (before 9 AM) as some firms call earlier than 9 AM. Most law firms first give you a call first, usually from a human resources representative or the Partner / Senior Associate who interviewed you. Should you accept the verbal offer, you will receive an email with the contract.

Third, if you have not received a phone call

immediately, do not be disheartened. You have until 1 PM to receive a call and usually if there is a delay it is likely because the Partner is stuck on a client call or is busy.

Do I have to accept the offer straight away?

You do not have to accept an offer straight away. The law firms understand that you may need some extra time to ensure that the period or firm fits with you. You can simply reply with ‘Thank you so much for the offer, can I just get back to you shortly.’ That being said, you should keep in mind that the law firms also have a deadline of 1 PM so as soon as you know which ones you want and don’t want to inform the respective firms expeditiously.

Finally, if you are successful enough (or applied to many) you might have to reject some offers. This is a daunting experience, but rest-assured the law firms are expecting some rejections. If you have to reject an offer or two just make sure you do so professionally. An example could be calling back and saying ‘Thank you so much for your time and the offer, unfortunately I cannot accept it because I have already accepted 3 others (or another reason).’

GRADUATES

I'M AT THE END OF MY DEGREE... NOW WHAT?

A graduate position is an entry-level job specifically designed for individuals who have recently completed their undergraduate or postgraduate degree. These positions are tailored to help graduates transition from academic life to the professional workforce. Graduate programs give you the practical training and hands on experience necessary to aid your entry into the profession. In the legal profession, a firm's graduate program typically goes for 1-2 years.

When do I start thinking about Graduate Positions?

The earlier you plan for your future the better prepared you will be for applying for graduate positions. As a rule of thumb, students should keep an eye on the market from the penultimate year of their degree, in order to make informed decisions about where they want to apply during their final year.

How do I apply?

In most instances, an initial application will require a cover letter and CV. Depending on the firm, you may also have to undertake

personality or competency testing, or answer any questions about the firm, the position and your suitability for the job. Even if you've clerked with the firm you are applying for, some firms may require you to interview again. Others may also host a social event where all applicants can attend and get to know each other.

The majority of private practice firms, in-house legal teams and government organisations offer graduate positions. However, most graduates are sourced from the organisation's previous pool of clerks or interns. This is why the clerkship process is critical to the attainment of a graduate position. That being said, some firms do source graduates on the open market too.

Where can I browse graduate jobs?

In most instances, graduate jobs will be advertised through a firm's website. Like the clerkship process, research is the key to finding the firm and position that suits you. cvMail is a great starting point if you are looking to apply for several positions quickly.

WHAT ELSE COULD I DO?

Not everyone uses their Juris Doctor for a legal career. A law degree is a highly versatile qualification that can lead you to highly rewarding careers in numerous fields. Options to consider might be:

- Accounting
- Advocacy
- Consulting

- Contract management
- Human resources / recruitment
- Investment banking
- Journalism
- Politics
- Public Policy
- Start-ups
- Teaching & academia

Just to list a few...

GRADUATE OFFERS DAY

What happens on offers day?

Similar to vacation clerkship offers, firms will usually start notifying students of offers for graduate positions at 9am on the day. These offers are typically held open until 1pm, however this may depend on which organisation you're receiving an offer from.

What is a priority offer?

Priority offers are now made by many firms to applicants who have previously worked or undertaken a vacation clerkship with that firm.

What is an early offer?

A number of firms offer graduate positions to students after the completion of their vacation clerkship. If you are lucky enough to receive one, it gives you assurance for the year ahead!

What is a market offer?

Some firms also use the standard offer system where all interested applicants are required to submit an application and proceed through an interview process before offers are made.

FINDING HELP

Your Network

Make the most of the people you know! The legal community in Perth is very small and people are always willing to help. Don't be afraid to ask questions during this process, as help is always just around the corner. Your peers, Blackstone and HR departments are all here to support you during the recruitment period.

Perth Law Careers Fair & Mid Year Careers Fair

Building your network is an important skill when entering the workforce. The Perth Law Careers Fair and Mid Year Careers Fair are highly valuable initiatives run by Blackstone's Careers team. At both of these fairs, you will have the chance to meet representatives from the major law firms in Perth. Take this opportunity to find out more about their firms and to ask questions about what they look for in applicants, so you can tailor your applications effectively. You'll make the best impression if you approach the firms with some knowledge and questions ready to go. This Handbook is the perfect resource to gain foundational insight into some firms. The Fair is the perfect chance to clear up any questions you have.

Other Campus Event

In addition to the Careers Fairs, the Blackstone Careers team coordinates numerous events, networking nights and presentations that will give you valuable insights into the recruitment process at various firms.

IMPORTANT DATES 2025

CLERKSHIP RECRUITMENT

Applications open: Monday 23 June 2025

Applications close: Sunday 27 July 2025

**Review and interview: Monday 28 July to
Friday 5 September 2025**

Offers Made: Friday 12 September 2025 (9am)

Offers held open to: Friday 12 September 2025 (1pm)

GRADUATE RECRUITMENT

Offers Made: Friday 18 July 2025 (9am)

Offers held open to: Friday 18 July 2025 (1pm)

ADMISSIONS

At the completion of a law degree, in order to be admitted into practice a prospective practitioner must complete a practical legal training (PLT) course that complies with the training requirements for admission. There are many courses available, including the College of Law, Leo Cussen Centre for Law, Curtin Practical Legal Training and Piddington PLT.

These courses usually run for a year and require a prospective practitioner to complete additional study, whilst obtaining a certain number of hours of practical experience. Upon completion of the PLT course, prospective practitioners are required to file a Motion Paper with the Supreme Court at least two months prior to the proposed admission date.

This requires you to find a legal practitioner to move your admission at the ceremony. For more information, see the admissions section of the Supreme Court website. Within two days of filing the Motion Paper, you must then file a Notice of Application for Admission with the Legal Practice Board of WA, together with a copy of the Motion Paper and other supporting documentation.

Following the receipt of the application, the Legal Practice Board will place the required advertisements and the Supreme Court will write directly to you to confirm arrangements for the ceremony. The Board will file a compliance certificate with the Court, at least seven days prior to the admission ceremony.

Australia

Western Australia

In Western Australia, you are required to have

gained a qualification of either a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) or Juris Doctor (JD). Graduates must then complete their PLT in the form of Supervised Legal Training and Practical Legal Training Course by approved providers. You then make an application for admission. You will then take and sign the oath and sign the Roll. You will then apply for a Practising Certificate to practise law in Western Australia.

Federal Jurisdiction

At a Federal Jurisdiction level, you are required to have gained a qualification of either an LLB or JD. Practitioners are required to be entitled to practice in the Supreme Court of their relevant State or Territory jurisdiction. You must then apply for the entry in the Register of Practitioners kept in the High Court of Australia.

New South Wales

In New South Wales, you are required to have gained a qualification of either an LLB or JD. Graduates must then complete a PLT in the form of Supervised Legal Training or a Practical Legal Training Course by approved providers. You must then lodge an application for admission, take and sign the oath and sign the Roll of Australian Lawyers on the admission day at the Supreme Court of New South Wales where they will receive their Certificate of Admission. After admission you may apply for a Practising Certificate issued by the Council of The Law Society of New South Wales in order to practise law in NSW.

Victoria

In Victoria, you are required to have gained a qualification of either an LLB or JD. Graduates must then complete a PLT in the form of Supervised Legal Training or Practical Legal Training Course by an approved provider. You

will attend a ceremony in the Supreme Court of Victoria where you will take and sign the Oath and sign the Roll. Once admitted, a person may apply to the Victorian Legal Services Board for a Practising Certificate.

South Australia

In South Australia, you are required to have gained a qualification of either an LLB or JD. Graduates must complete PLT in the form of Supervised Legal Training or Practical Legal Training Course by an approved provider. The Board of Examiners must formally accredit these qualifications prior to admission. You must then lodge an application for admission to the Supreme Court of South Australia. Once you have been admitted and sign the Roll of Practitioners, you must apply for a Practising Certificate with the Law Society of South Australia.

International

Europe

Most European countries require both an LLM and LLB. You must then obtain a licence or diploma in one of the European countries which would allow you to practise in another. Membership of individual bar associations are sometimes required by States to use the title of 'lawyer', however, you may still practise law without it.

Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, you are required to be a valid legal practitioner in your jurisdiction of admission and to practise in the jurisdiction for at least three years. Hopeful candidates need to pass the Barristers Qualification Examination (BQE).

Singapore

You are required to be a qualified person (UWA graduate in the top 70% of your class), and a permanent resident of Singapore. You are

required to pass the Bar before undertaking a five month training course in Singaporean law and finally a six month training contract with a law firm. If you have over three years of experience as a lawyer, you can take the Foreign Practitioner Exam to be admitted instead.

Japan

An Australian law degree won't be of much help for practising Japanese law in Japan. You would be required to get dual qualifications. It is therefore more pragmatic to practise Australian Law in Japan as a registered foreign lawyer with the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA).

New Zealand

Under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (Cth), as a registered practitioner in Australia, you are also able to practise in New Zealand. Once you are admitted in Australia, you will then need to be registered by the relevant court in New Zealand.

Canada

Gaining admission in Canada is quite difficult. You are required to have your qualifications evaluated by the National Committee on Accreditation in order to get a 'certificate of qualification'. The Committee may require you to sit exams on Canadian Law. You may also be required to complete additional courses at a Canadian Law School. In addition, there are specific requirements for each province, and you will have to undertake an articling program. You may need to do less time in this program if you are experienced as a lawyer in Australia.

United Kingdom

Admission in the United Kingdom requires an LLB or JD qualification. It requires you to take part in a PLT course. Lawyers who have been admitted to practise in Australia are allowed to

practise in England and Wales as solicitors by transferring through the Solicitors' Regulations Authority (SRA) under the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme (QLTS).

United States

The requests for admission vary in the United States from state to state. Generally speaking, either a JD or a Master of Law (LLM) is required before sitting the bar examination in the relevant state. The difficulty of the bar examination varies from state to state.

Secondments

A 'secondment' is where a lawyer or graduate joins an in-house legal team or travels to work at another location. Secondments can range from intrastate, interstate or even international. Some firms may have a national or international presence and you may have the opportunity to work in those offices for various lengths of time.

Secondments are a great opportunity to experience what it is like to work in another country and jurisdiction. Usually, the firm will have processes and policies in place to make the practicing requirements more streamlined. Secondments are also a great way to travel, experience different cultures, and learn how your area of law is practised in different places.

APPLICATIONS

What do you need?

- **ACV**
- **Cover Letter**
- **Most Recent Academic Transcript**



Additional Questions

Some firms will require you to answer additional questions as part of their application process. These questions are designed to find out more about you and your achievements, what you can offer the firm, why you decided to pursue a career in law and questions about your level of industry awareness. Further, some firms' additional questions are an alternative to cover letters. Your answers are your only chance to showcase your personality and make an impression to earn an interview. First impressions go a long way, so make sure you sufficiently spend enough time answering the question. As a law graduate, you must write clearly and persuasively, so demonstrate this.

Typical questions will involve asking you about specific situations, usually outside of university and your studies. For example, they may ask, 'what do you feel is your greatest achievement, and what challenges did you face in achieving it?' In other situations, your responses should convince the firm or organisation that you are interested in pursuing a career in law and your willingness to work with that firm or organisation. Such questions may include 'what is your motivation for seeking a career in law?' or 'what has attracted you to this firm or organisation?' Additionally, some questions are asked for the firm to get to know you better. Your answer should try to capture what you truly enjoy doing outside of study. For example: 'tell us something outside of the law and your studies that you are passionate about.'

Firms and organisations want to know that you are interested in the industry and that you will be able to assist their clients and provide innovative solutions. It is important that you conduct research in preparation for these questions. Some example questions may be: 'identify a current commercial or legal issue that has attracted your attention recently. Why do you consider it important / why does it interest you?' or 'Who are the key stakeholders and what are the implications for those concerned?'

Online Testing

In addition to a written application, several firms conduct online testing. The purpose of these tests is to assess your personality, your intellectual quotient (IQ), your emotional quotient (EQ), and to gauge how you deal with pressure. These tests can vary widely depending on the firm, and you generally cannot prepare for them. If you are therefore asked to complete a test, it is recommended that you give yourself ample time to do so, as online testing can be time-consuming. When completing online testing, ensure that you find a quiet place where you will not be distracted. Finally, a good tip is to space them out and do them with a clear head. Do not try to 'smash them out' all in one day or back-to-back. After all, they are part of the assessment process.

Application Tips

1. First impressions count!! Your written application is the first impression you give to a firm so give it everything!
2. Ensure you have addressed your cover letter to the correct firm and person to whom you're applying. The last thing you want to do is miss out due to silly mistakes like addressing your cover letter to the wrong person/firm.
3. Make sure to address the selection criteria the firm outlines. These are usually stated on their website.
4. Avoid writing a generic cover letter and using it for multiple applications. Each firm has different values, and you want to ensure that you are tailoring each cover letter to each firm.

Networking Events

Many firms host a networking evening or a cocktail function as part of their application process. Firms will usually invite candidates that have been successful in receiving an interview with the firm.

These events are designed to see how you interact with the firm's employees in a social environment. They provide the firm with a good opportunity to get to know you in a more relaxed setting, away from the stresses of the interview room.

At these events, it is best to speak to as many people as possible as doing so will help you to gain an understanding of the culture at the firm. It is also important to meet other applicants as this demonstrates that you are sociable, and these people may even become your future colleagues.

Networking Tips

- Always wear corporate attire;
- Be on your best behaviour. Don't be 'that person' who drinks too much;
- Make sure you try to mingle and meet new people;
- Just be yourself! The firm has chosen you to be part of this stage of the recruitment process for a reason; and
- Be polite and courteous to everyone. This includes the other applicants and wait staff, firms do not take lightly to discourteous behaviour.

CRAFTING YOUR CV

WHAT IS IT?

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resumé is a brief account of a candidate's education, employment history, qualifications, extra-curricular activities, and hobbies and interests. A candidate's CV is usually sent together with a cover letter and should be tailored to highlight skills and experiences relevant to the firm and position the candidate is applying to. Similar to a cover letter, it is the employer's first contact they have with a candidate and therefore, presentation, format and structure are all essential.

TIPS

1. Use professional language

- Highlight specific skills and qualifications relevant to the firm's application criteria.
- Keep your CV to two pages in length if possible.
- Proofread your CV, ask your family and friends to read over it as well. Spelling and grammatical errors can detract from the quality of your application.
- There is no single correct structure to use. Pick a professional format that you like and ensure you are consistent throughout your CV.
- Use headings to divide your CV into sections, such as education, work experience, achievements and interests.
- Avoid using large paragraphs for descriptions.
- Use short sentences and bullet points.
- Do not include a picture of yourself.

2. Personal Details

You should include your full name, address, contact number and email address.

3. Education

You should outline your education history in reverse chronological order and include the name of the course, the institution and

length of study. For tertiary study, you should include your GPA and/or WAM. Feel free to include your secondary study, including your university entry mark.

4. Employment History

If you have extensive and relevant past experience, you may decide to include this first. You should outline all your relevant work experience, in reverse chronological order, beginning with your most recent/present employment. Ensure to include your job title, start/finish employment dates, name of employer and responsibilities. Be sure to include the skills you developed and any achievements or accomplishments if you believe they are relevant.

5. Extracurricular

In this section, include your involvement at school and university, alongside any community engagement. Examples include university societies, participating in competitions, sporting team or volunteering experiences. You should highlight the skills you developed in these positions, such as teamwork or leadership.

Examples include university societies, participating in competitions, sporting team or volunteering experiences. You should highlight the skills you developed in these positions, such as teamwork or leadership.

6. Others

You may decide to include other headings to suit your personal circumstances or which may be particularly relevant to the position or firm you are applying for. You can include other headings such as: Interests, Achievements, Leadership or Completed Courses such as first aid or computer proficiency.

7. Referees

Referees may be included at the end of a CV as a point reference which prospective employers may contact. Referees are usually former or current employers, a teacher, or someone who is able to comment on your work and skills in a professional setting. Try to avoid including personal references, such as family members or close friends. You do not have to include referees and it is sufficient to say 'referees available upon request' under the heading. If you wish to include referees, two is appropriate. Ensure you include the person's name, their position, the company name and their contact number. If you decide to include referees, be sure to ask their permission, inform them of the position you are applying for and the skills they are looking for.

Sample CV

Kindly Annotated by Corrs Chambers Westgarth

Harvey Specter

M: 0400 123 456 | E: harvey.specter@gmail.com

EDUCATION

The University of Western Australia, Juris Doctor

WAM: 77.833

- High Distinction in Contract Law and Torts

2019 – present

The University of Western Australia, Bachelor of Commerce (Business Law, Finance)

WAM: 80.750

- Golden Key Society, member by invitation (top 15% of cohort).

2016 – 2018

Harvard Senior High School, Western Australian Certificate of Education

ATAR: 99.65.

2011 – 2015

SELECTED EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Florrick Agos, Legal Intern and Paralegal

August 2021 – present

- Placed in Ms Alicia Florrick's construction disputes team. I conduct research and prepare case and legislation memoranda.

Blue Circle Community Legal, Volunteer Paralegal

August 2020 – August 2021

- Conduct client interviews; draft Family Court documents, client letters and Criminal Injuries Compensation claims; conduct legal research in Contract, Equity, Tenancy and Employment.
- Prepare written submissions to the Australian Human Rights and WA Equal Opportunity Commissions and the WA Ombudsman. Research and apply the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and related case-law.

The University of Western Australia, Sessional Tutor

2019 – present

- Facilitate classroom tutorials and mark assessments for Introduction to Law.
- Developed learning materials and oversaw transition to online teaching as the Head Tutor for Introduction to Law (2020). Achieved a final coursework average mark higher than pre-COVID-19 levels.

SELECTED VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Blackstone Society Representative

2021

- Implemented a range of new initiatives and accordingly achieved a significant increase in student engagement.

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Commented [Corrs1]: Writing your name clearly at the top of your resume makes its very easy for the reviewer to identify the application.

Commented [Corrs2]: Ensure your contact details are correct - and include your LinkedIn profile too, if you have one.

Commented [Corrs3]: Using clear bold headings is a great way to layout different sections of the resume and make it easier for the reviewer to follow and read.

Commented [Corrs4]: Be aware of inconsistent formatting - and make sure the dates are right-aligned throughout your resume.

Commented [Corrs5]: Always include your WAM for your law degree. If you have won any unit prizes or awards, you can also include that information here.

Commented [Corrs6]: As noted above, be aware of inconsistent formatting and right-align the dates. And don't forget to proof and spell-check your resume too!

Commented [Corrs7]: If you choose to include your high school information, highlight any key leadership roles, achievements and exceptional ATAR scores.

Commented [Corrs8]: Consider using the word "Key" versus "Selected" when highlighting your employment and volunteering experience.

Commented [Corrs9]: Consider having some more spacing between the company name and job title (or put on separate lines), to make it easier for the reviewer to distinguish between the two.

Commented [Corrs10]: Using bullet points is a great way to outline your experience in a concise, but easy-to-read format.

It can be helpful to include any key achievements, or demonstrated skills that you have learnt on the job too.

Commented [Corrs11]: Be mindful of too much empty space in your resume, especially between sections.

Commented [Corrs12]: Most firms are interested to learn about your volunteering and extra-curricular activities, so this is a great section to include in your resume.

Consider outlining how many hours/days per week you volunteered in each role.

Commented [Corrs13]: Consider including your referees details, rather than noting they are available upon request.

Make sure the referees are current and, where possible, are people who have directly supervised you.

Commented [Corrs14]: Keep your resume to 1-2 pages max. You may also wish to include some information about your outside interests/hobbies, and your computer/technical skills too.

COVER LETTERS

A cover letter is a job application letter which candidates use to explain to an employer why they are qualified for the position and why they should be selected for an interview. It is the means by which an employer will be able to gain their first impression. This provides candidates the opportunity to make their applications stand out from the rest and show the employer your personality through your writing.

The Essentials

You should set out your personal details in the top right corner of your cover letter. This includes your name, address, email and contact number. Below this, on the left hand-side, you should include the name of the person you are addressing your cover letter to, their position within the firm, the name of the firm and the firm's address.

The use of a heading (in bold) goes a long way in making the cover letter easy to read. Use this to state the position you are applying for – e.g. **RE: Application for 2024 [Firm] Clerkship Program.**

Start your cover letter with “Dear Ms/Mr [Last name you are addressing the cover letter to]”. It is best to avoid addressing them as “Sir/Madam” or writing “To Whom It May Concern”, as it shows that you have not researched the firm. If you are ever unsure, ask the Blackstone Careers team

or call the firm to ask. In most instances, the application will advise you to address your cover letter to a specific person, usually the Office Manager, Head of Human Resources, Managing Partner or Principal of the firm.

The Benefits of a good cover letter

A great cover letter will show off your achievements and focus quite heavily on why you want to work at a specific firm. It highlights how a candidate can contribute to the firm. Further, it shows how a candidate has prepared for their application by researching the firm, the nature of the position and ensuring that they address the selection criteria. Finally, it gives the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their written communication skill, structure, and clarity of written expression. In an area such as law it is crucial to demonstrate that you are a good writer!

Tips when writing

- Introduce yourself briefly at the start of the cover letter.
- Make sure you state what year of study you're in and when you intend to graduate.
- Keep your cover letter to one page.
- Ensure your cover letter is addressed to the right person.
- If you have a particular interest in an area of law you know the firm specialise in, make sure you mention this. Be sure to mention why it interests you and relate it to the firm.
- Plan and write your cover letters well in advance.
- Highlight your strengths and how you can use these to benefit the firm.
- Write in first-person.
- Ensure you tailor your cover letter to each firm and are satisfying the selection criteria.
- Do not just repeat your CV. Give practical examples building on your CV.
- Proofread your cover letter, get family and friends to read over it as well. Spelling and grammatical can make your cover letter look weak. In some circumstances, minor errors may cost you the position.
- Avoid using big words and colourful adjectives. You should write in plain English; be clear and concise.
- Ensure you send the correctly addressed cover letter to the correct firm (you would be surprised how many people mess up!).

Suggested Structure

1. Introduction

The introduction should outline the name of your degree, how far into your studies you are, the position you are applying for and when you are expecting to graduate. You can also include what your previous / other degree was.

2. The organisation

This paragraph should outline why you are interested in the specific firm. Use evidence to support this, such as sharing similar values with the firm or identifying appealing aspects about the organisation. Additionally, conduct research into the firm, their various practice groups, any people you have met, interesting work that the firm is currently working on, recent matters the firm has completed or recent achievements or awards the firm has received. Be sure to include evidence of the different awards they have won – these can be found in the careers handbook.

3. About you

This paragraph should set out the skills and qualifications you have that are necessary for meeting the selection criteria. You should support this with evidence or examples of your past employment history, extra-curricular activities, and volunteer positions. Ensure you are emphasising your skills. These skills could include attention to detail, leadership, teamwork and ability to manage multiple tasks at one time. Then, provide examples of how you demonstrated those skills in a practical setting. It is good to think of this part as almost answering an interview question about a time you demonstrated a skill. This would allow you to adequately structure your answer in a well-structured way.

4. Conclusion

A conclusion should thank the person addressed for their time and consideration of your application, and state that you look forward to hearing from them. You should sign off with 'Yours sincerely' if you have addressed the letter to someone by their name (i.e Dear Ms. Fortune). Otherwise, sign off with 'Yours faithfully' if you have addressed the letter to someone by their position, if their name is unknown to you (i.e Dear Human Resources Manager).

Sample Cover Letter

Kindly Annotated by Corrs Chambers Westgarth

Harvey Specter
35 Stirling Hwy
Crawley WA 6009
0400 123 456
harvey.specter@gmail.com

Mr Louis Litt
Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett
333 Bay St
Toronto, M5H 2R2

Dear Mr Litt

Application for Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett 2023 / 24 Seasonal Clerkship

I write to apply for Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett's 2023 / 24 Seasonal Clerkship program. I am a penultimate year Juris Doctor student at the University of Western Australia (UWA). I also hold a Bachelor of Commerce degree (Business Law and Finance) from UWA. Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett is a leading firm that embodies excellence across diverse practice groups, and accordingly, I would be immensely privileged for a clerkship position.

I believe I am a suitable candidate, partially because I bring a heightened sense of commercial awareness. As a volunteer for a student-run management consulting charity, I am regularly afforded client interactions where I am responsible for analysing the client's objectives and providing them with a practical solution. A recent example of this was working in a team to design a tailored fundraising strategy for a client that furthered their strategic goals as a health charity in addition to raising revenue.

I also take pride in my strong work ethic, embodied by the length of my commitment tenures. Although I am yet to obtain commercial law experience, I am strongly committed to it. Volunteering at Blue Circle Community Legal exposed considerably to general legal practice. Further, I discovered an enthusiasm for client-focused commercial problem solving through business and consulting. Finally, I found the commercial law units the most engaging at university. Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett is known for excellence across both transactional and litigious practice areas. The above matters lead me to conclude I would value the opportunity to be exposed to an environment where lawyers are challenged to integrate commercial acumen with sound legal advice to provide innovative solutions.

Finally, I am drawn to Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett due to its reputation for fostering a culture of excellence, inclusion, friendliness and respect. In this regard, I spoke to Mr Michael Ross, Ms Donna Paulsen and yourself at the Perth Law Careers Fair, and Ms Katrina Bennett at the Blackstone Society's Speed Interview event. Everyone was eager to promote the supportive and relaxed atmosphere at Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett. Moreover, I understand Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett offers an initial one-year rotation for graduates, in addition to offering opportunities for secondments with leading international firms. A personal goal of mine is to work in a supportive environment whilst pursuing excellence, and it is clear that Litt Wheeler Williams Bennett satisfies this goal.

Thank you for your consideration of my application, and I look forward to discussing it further at your convenience.

Yours faithfully

Harvey Specter

Commented [Corrs1]: Ensure that you double check that your mobile number and email address are correct - so the firm can easily contact you.

Commented [Corrs2]: It is imperative that you address your application to the right firm, with the right address - this information is readily available on firm websites or career handbooks, so no excuses for getting this wrong! Where possible, include the name of the relevant HR contact too.

Commented [Corrs3]: It is good practice to include a subject heading for your cover letter, to clearly indicate what role you are applying for with the firm.

Commented [Corrs4]: Consider saying "I am writing" versus "I write" as this introduction flows a little more smoothly.

Commented [Corrs5]: It is helpful to indicate what year of study you are in - first year, penultimate or final year.

As mentioned in the next sentence, some firms are also interested to know what your undergraduate degree is too.

Commented [Corrs6]: This is quite generic - consider being more specific about whether the firm is international, national or local. Eg. "a leading international firm".

Commented [Corrs7]: Don't forget to proof read your cover letter. This sentence is missing a few key words.

Please also use concise language - it is acceptable to say you "would be privileged" to be offered a clerkship position, versus saying you would be "immensely privileged".

Commented [Corrs8]: Where possible, it is good practice to include an example to support a statement you have made about your skills, experience or traits.

Commented [Corrs9]: Use plain English when writing your cover letter. Don't try to use big words or uncommon phrases like this - keep it simple and straightforward.

Commented [Corrs10]: Consider commencing the paragraph with this sentence, and then outlining why you want to work for the firm with the other points listed in the paragraph.

Also demonstrate your knowledge of the firm by referring to a recent client matter, deal or award that you find interesting and has led you to apply to the firm.

Commented [Corrs11]: By referring to the firm's values, this shows you have looked at their website and/or spoken with employees of the firm. It demonstrates you have invested some time and are interested in getting to know the firm you are applying to.

Commented [Corrs12]: You can easily personalise your cover letter by mentioning you have met employees of the firm at campus events, or attended a firm-sponsored event. This further demonstrates your interest and engagement with the firm.

Commented [Corrs13]: It is good practice to format your cover letter to fit on one page. And signatures are not required for applications uploaded online. You are now good to go!

Interviews

INTERVIEW OFFERS

Congratulations on receiving an interview!

The firm now wants to know whether you will be a good fit in their firm. The interview is an opportunity for you to showcase your personality while highlighting your skills, talents, experience, and knowledge of the job. Firms will look to ask you to elaborate on your CV and cover letter to assess your suitability to work at the firm.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Generally, there are two types of interviews, individual and group interviews.

Individual Interviews

Individual interviews are usually conducted by the human resources team along with another member of the firm (often a Partner) in a traditional interview style. Some firms will use a generic question list whereas other firms will speak purely to your CV and cover letter. They are trying to get to know you better and understand how well you could fit within their firm. They are assessing your personality and characteristics and how you would fit into their office culture. They are looking for people they would like to work with, standing shoulder to shoulder. It's important that you remain friendly and smile. In an individual interview you could be asked a range of questions. These can be broken up into two main categories. (For examples check the sample questions below)

First, general or personal. These questions focus on your personality, experience, and achievements. Firms will generally ask you about things you have achieved, why you chose to study law, and things you included in your CV and cover letter.

Second, technical and situational. These questions focus on your ability to overcome adversity and your knowledge of the legal and commercial world. It is best to come in prepared for these questions. Research the firms and run mock interview sessions with friends, family, or colleagues.

Group Interviews

Group interviews are designed to assess your ability to work in a team setting. More often than not, you will be required to discuss a problem scenario or case notes as a group. The problems tend to be generic in nature and often focus on ethics and technical related questions. It is important to communicate effectively with your team members and work together to achieve a common goal. Showcase both your ability to lead and your ability to work well as part of a team. If there is a member of your team who is being shy, ask them for their opinion on the matter and empower them to be included into the group. Be careful not to do this in a condescending way though! There will be one or two 'silent interviewers' present in the room who will observe the dynamics of the team and assess the problem scenario.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Preparation & Research

The interview stage is a great opportunity for you to set yourself apart from the rest. Be diligent and prepare for your interview by conducting research in order to gain a better understanding of the firm. Interviewers will want you to demonstrate your interest in the law, the firm and exhibit a desire to join them. You should conduct research into the firm's culture, what they look for in prospective employees and, if you are told beforehand, the interviewers themselves. Be prepared to answer questions regarding some of the experiences that you have outlined in your CV and cover letter. Further, you should conduct research about the actual job and what it entails. You should have an in-depth understanding of the job description and be ready to express why you are the best person for the role.

The firm's website is a good place to start when putting your applications together. You will find the firm's values, various practice groups, employee biographies, recent transactions and information about clerkships and graduate programs. You may also discover whether the firm engages in pro bono or volunteering activities.

The Australian Financial Review and Lawyers Weekly are also great sources to help you

understand the commercial climate. Many firms will look for candidates that are up-to-date on current affairs, especially those that include clients of the firm.

Be Yourself!

Don't walk into an interview pretending to be someone else. You want the firm to hire you for who you are not the person that you are pretending to be. Who you are is something special. Read through your CV and cover letter thoroughly. Remind yourself of all the achievements and experiences that you have listed and be prepared to share anything you may have learned in a well-structured manner. Be honest. Be confident. Be YOURSELF!

Networks

Use the network of the people you know to ask them questions. This could be your peers, the Blackstone Committee, or relevant HR departments. Talk to people who work or have worked at the firm that you are applying to. Ensure that you are speaking to a range of people to gain a holistic perspective of the organisation. The key is to try to build relationships early and maintain them throughout the year, so your contact doesn't feel 'used' when you need to ask them for help before an interview. Also remember that people love helping one another and that they will feel honoured that you are asking them for their advice and opinion, so never feel afraid to reach out!

The Blackstone Careers Portfolio hosts several networking events throughout the year, and are a great way to meet representatives from the major law firms in Perth. These networking events offer the opportunity for prospective candidates to ask questions about what they look for in an applicant. Candidates should also ask representatives what it is like to work at their firm and how they would describe the firm's culture. These will all form indicators for what the firm is looking for when they are hiring applicants.

Finally, don't be afraid to just cold-call / email lawyers at firms and areas of law you are interested in and ask for a coffee. Be respectful in your approach and don't let any rejections wear you down. These are professionals and

are sometimes just simply too busy to meet up. Most people really enjoy talking about what they do and helping others. Remember they were once in your shoes and know how difficult the process is!

WHAT NOT TO DO IN AN INTERVIEW

- Arrive late;
- Poor presentation, improperly dressed and or lacking in cleanliness; » Bad manners, lack of eye contact;
- Addressing the interviewer by the wrong name;
- Cutting off the interviewer mid-sentence to answer;
- Inability to listen/not answering the questions properly; and
- Having little or no knowledge about the organisation.
- NB: If you have lied on your CV, this will be where you get caught out. It is therefore important to be truthful on your CV so that you speak from experience rather than having to make up a story on the spot!

HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS

One method which is widely used is the STAR method. This method is useful because it provides a framework which you can use to ensure you are adequately answering the question :

- **Situation:** Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.
- **Task:** Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.
- **Action:** Explain exactly what steps you took to address it.
- **Result:** Share what outcomes your actions achieved and reflect on what you could have possibly done to improve.

The best way to prepare for interview questions is to practise. We have included some example questions below, which you can use to practise the STAR method to ace your interview!

Sample Questions

Personal Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Describe a time you have demonstrated leadership skills?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- Describe a time when you conflicted with another member of a team.
- Describe a time when you were faced with a difficult problem. How did you approach it?
- What has been your most enjoyable unit?
- What has been your least enjoyable unit?
- Tell me about a time you worked under pressure?
- Why did you leave your previous job?
- What is your greatest achievement?
- What is your biggest regret?
- Describe a time when you had to meet a difficult deadline. How did you approach it?

Law Questions

- What has inspired you to take up a career in the legal profession?
- What made you decide to practice in your particular area of law?
- What is a current issue facing the legal profession? How do you see it affecting the future?
- What is a recent commercial / legal issue or case that interested you and why did it interest you?
- Why are you interested in commercial law? (If you are applying for a commercial law position ensure that your answer shows a genuine interest in commercial law)

Firm Questions

- What makes you want to work at this firm?
- What skills can you contribute to this firm and this position?
- How do you see our firm differentiate itself from our competitors?
- If there was one thing you would change about our firm, what would it be and why?
- Why this firm?
- Why this specific area? (If you have expressed an interest in a specific area of law make sure you can answer why)

Potential Questions for Candidates to Ask

- What is the most exciting/interesting part of working for this firm?
- Why did you choose to work here?
- What attracted you to working in your practice group?
- What would an average day as a clerk be like?
- What tasks would a clerk be required to undertake?
- How often is feedback provided?
- Does the firm offer any international opportunities?
- Does the firm engage in any community activities, if so what?
- How would you describe the 'culture' at the firm?
- Does the organisation have policies in place for diversity and inclusion?
- Do you have any advice for someone interested in a career in law?
- How is the health and wellbeing of employees encouraged in the firms?
- Why did you choose to work here?

Towards the end of an interview, the interviewers will most likely ask if you have any questions for them. This is a great way to show your proactive nature and show them that you are prepared. Try some of the questions above to get the ball rolling.

Articles from the Profession

This section of the handbook contains a compilation of articles relating to the pathways that are open to law students and graduates. A range of legal and non-legal professions have written these articles. For those with aspirations in certain areas of law, we hope these articles impart some valuable information which can aid you as your career progresses.

CLERKING AT HSF KRAMER

Contributions from the 2025 HSF Kramer Graduates

Why did you apply to, and accept an offer from HSF?

- I accepted an offer from HSF Kramer as I enjoyed my clerkship with the firm. I found the work that I completed on my clerkship interesting and I enjoyed the company of the people I worked with!
- I applied to HSF Kramer as I heard through word of mouth and at clerkship events that it was a firm with a great market reputation.
- Everyone is super intelligent, highly motivated and always willing to help you develop your skills as a lawyer.
- The number of practice groups and the opportunities HSF Kramer would provide were the two main factors in my application to HSF Kramer and my acceptance of their offer. However, during my time as a clerk, what distinguished HSF Kramer from the other firms I clerked at was (as cliché as it is to say) the people and the culture within the office. All of the people in the office seemed to make the extra effort to get to know you and I knew that HSF would provide the most support to me during the early stages of my career.

Commerciality is a topic that students are frequently asked about in applications and interviews. What unique experiences did you have, and how did you speak to them to demonstrate your interest in commercial law?

- You do not need to have studied commerce or business at university to be able to answer questions on commerciality in your applications and interviews for clerkships. It is always helpful to look at firm websites, look at deals a firm has completed, and

keep up to date with current business news. However, do not be dissuaded from approaching commercial questions from a personal perspective. As my family has worked in the oil and gas industry, and this is what stemmed my interest in working in commercial law, I would simply answer with that!

- I had been a paralegal at HSF Kramer for 18 months before applying for my clerkship, however, I stress that this was not at all a requirement to demonstrate commerciality. Commercial legal experience and your first-hand experience in a particular market/industry is obviously an easy way to demonstrate commerciality, but I also spoke to my understanding of current issues in international markets thanks to my International Relations degree, as well as my experience as a previous Intern at the U.S. Consulate General Perth (both of which were obviously non-legal). If you don't have commercial legal experience, I would recommend reading up on current issues that the firms are reporting on (check LinkedIn, the firm's website, podcasts, the Australian Financial Review etc.). Don't try and become an expert in the area - just read enough to understand that it is a current issue and the firm is working in that space (you can think of some well-considered questions here too).
- I volunteered at two charities during my time at uni. One was as an Administrative Coordinator and the other as a Volunteer Consultant. Both of these focused on organisational development and overcoming challenges faced by organisations to enhance their impact within the community. Using these

examples, as well as my general interest in my studies, I demonstrated an interest in commercial law as a fusion between these experiences – taking the ‘commercial’ aspect from my volunteering and the ‘law’ aspect from my studies

When asking around for interview tips, it's common to hear advice such as research the firm and prepare questions for the interviewers. How did you go about this (and preparation more generally)?

- In terms of researching the firm, I would look at the firm's website, LinkedIn profile and materials given to me at networking events. In particular, I would look at work the firm had done and their values..
- I think it is really important to research each firm you apply to because interviewers can definitely tell if you are merely responding to questions with generic answers.
- Knowing specific details about the firm (such as whether it is international or national, how many offices it has, what practice groups it has, information about its pro bono work, information about specific partners in the firm you would like to work with, information about a specific deal) shows you have a genuine interest in the firm. I believe this goes a long way, as it shows the firm isn't just 1 of 15 you have applied to.
- I think having a few questions to ask the interviewers also shows you are eager to learn as much as you can about the firm. While the firm's website provides some information, it only gets you so far. Being able to speak to people who have first-hand experience working at the firm will really add to your depth of knowledge.
- There is such a thing as over-preparation for

an interview - they don't want a rehearsed script and I found that HSF Kramer was the least ‘scripted’ interview by way of questions. Beyond understanding the firm, my reasons behind applying for HSF Kramer, questions and being prepared to talk to some of my prior experience, I did not overly prepare which was a huge benefit as the conversation was largely conversational and I could not have prepared for that.

How did you go about preferencing your clerkship practice group? Are there any disadvantages to picking a practice group that you're interested in, but have no prior experience with?

- My advice: if you feel an interest brewing in a particular practice area, you should preference this first. Don't let a lack of experience stand in the way as this practice group may be where you would like to end up. It can be worthwhile to give it a go to see how that team operates.
- I preferred areas that stood out to me as interesting – however it is important to keep an open mind as you will not always get your first preference.
- I had no strategy in preferencing my clerkship practice group (and no idea about what any of them did). In my three clerkships, I aimed to clerk in a different practice group for each one. I would not say there is any disadvantage to this (and there isn't a significant advantage in going to a practice group that is your ‘strength’). The clerkships provide you with an opportunity to get a feel for the firm and any practice group you might be interested in, it is worth using this as an opportunity to get a taste for many practice groups.

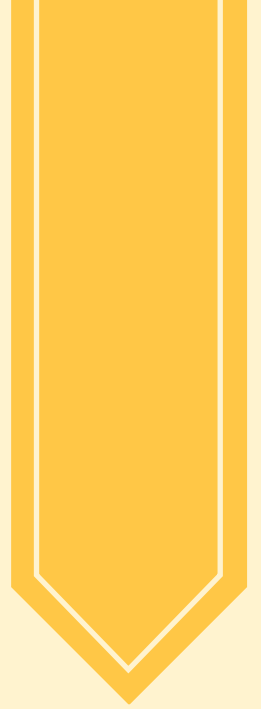
Having completed a HSF Kramer clerkship, how would you describe the experience and HSF culture?

- HSF Kramer definitely has a culture of excellence and expects a high standard of work. However, everyone who works at the firm is so friendly and supportive, and are ready to put the work in to help you perform at your best.
- I truly believe the people in the firm are great and really want you to succeed. The people in the firm prioritise being friendly, caring and supportive, rather than ultra-competitive.
- The lawyers remember what the nerves and discomfort of starting a clerkship feels like, so they endeavour to make you feel as welcome and comfortable as possible.

- Don't be afraid to be yourself in your applications and in interviews. HSF Kramer wants to know you as a person and why you have a genuine interest in working at the firm.

What's your advice for applicants?

- Build friendships during the clerkship events and clerkships themselves – you will see the same people and may end up working with them in the future. The Perth legal market is small!
- Apply to the firms you are interested in. Try to have some fun with this, as you won't ever get to be in contact with as many firms again (which is a unique experience). Do not let it become all-consuming, take time to focus on other aspects of your life and always keep in mind that everything will work out in the end
- Show that you are a well-rounded person - don't disregard your non-law experience/ interests. Show that you are genuinely interested, curious and eager to learn.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A HSF KRAMER GRADUATE

Harley Gardiner, Solicitor

6am

I wake up nice and early to go to the gym before work. After the gym, I'm wide awake and feeling ready for the day! I have some smashed avo on toast or if I'm running late, I pick up some banana bread from Eat House when I arrive to QV1. On the train, I read a book (think Twilight level of sophistication). As we get closer to the city, I have a quick look on my phone to see what work emails have come through and check my work calendar to see what the day has in store for me.

8:30am

I'm at my desk and the day begins. As part of our graduate program, we complete three six-month rotations in different teams. I previously rotated through the Disputes team and am now in my second rotation in the Employment, Industrial Relations and Safety team. I start the day off by drafting some forms for an unfair dismissal claim. The work in Employment is very "people" based and moves quickly, so you get to be involved in a range of different matters and a variety of work from enterprise bargaining and industrial action to advice to employers on what to do in the ever-evolving era of COVID-19.

10am

It's snack time. In the Employment team we have 'Munchin' Mondays' – a snack and chat morning tea every Monday. We have a roster where everyone takes turns bringing in a savoury or sweet snack for the team. This week someone has forgotten so they've done the standard I-forgot-I-was-rostered-on-this-Monday and gone downstairs to Mary Street

Bakery to get a selection of donuts for the team. Delicious!

11:30am

I have finished conducting a respondent interview for an investigation we are running for a client. Investigation work in the Employment team has been a highlight of my rotation. It involves drafting allegations, interviewing the complainant and witnesses, reviewing the documentary evidence, putting the allegations to the respondent and making findings on whether or not the alleged conduct occurred. Another highlight of my rotation in the Employment team was going up to Port Hedland for a few days to assist a client on their internal investigations. I stayed in FIFO accommodation and caught a plane up to site with other FIFO workers. They were all in high vis, so I stuck out like a sore thumb in my HSF smart casual.

12:30pm

It's lunch time so I head downstairs with some other grads to eat some sushi. We chat about where we're all going on our next rotation. I'm heading to the Environment & Planning team next which is part of our Real Estate practice. This will be my first front end rotation and I expect to learn a lot.

1:30pm

I'm heading down to the Supreme Court to be the instructing solicitor for Counsel in a matter I was involved in whilst in Disputes. I love having the opportunity to get involved in court work. When I was in my Disputes rotation I was lucky enough to get involved in a trial. The trial was based in Melbourne, but our client gave evidence in Perth (COVID time). During the trial, the client, myself and an Executive Counsel were based on our client floor. I will always be grateful to Dave, our Client Services Manager, for never failing to arrange coffees, hot chocolates and lunches to see us through. It was a great experience helping to prepare our witnesses to give evidence, and watching senior barristers work their magic during the trial.

4pm

The hearing is over and I get my steps in walking back to QV1. As an instructing solicitor, your role is to assist counsel during the hearing. This means making sure you can locate a document quickly. Whilst in Disputes, I also had my first ever court appearance. It was only an interlocutory hearing about subpoenas, which took a grand total of 7 minutes, and although I was told exactly what to say, everyone made a big deal of my first appearance and I won that month's "Onya Mate" award in Disputes!

5:30pm

Back at the office, I do a research task for an advice. Once I have finally found the golden nugget case, I finalise my research memo, submit my timers and head home.

LIFE AS AN ASSOCIATE

Julia Symons, Solicitor at State Solicitor's Office

I was an associate at the Supreme Court from February 2022 until June 2023. In September 2022, his Honour was appointed to the Court of Appeal, and so I spent half of my associateship in the General Division and the other half in the Court of Appeal. Though some details may have changed since my associateship as it was nearly two years ago, I hope the essential parts of the below assists you.

Day in the life as an associate

Your day-to-day life as an associate can vary tremendously depending on which court you work at, which judge you work for, and the nature of their caseload.

As a general division associate to a judge with a criminal caseload, much of my time was spent in court itself. General division associates' duties in court include operating audiovisual equipment and video-links, empanelling juries and taking verdicts. Outside of court, I spent my time on a mixture of administrative work (for example, corresponding with parties and preparing hardcopy files for hearings) and legal research and judgment proofing. Judgment proofing was a big part of the job, both in the general division and the Court of Appeal, and it involved not just proofreading as it is popularly understood but fact and law checking.

In the Court of Appeal, hearings typically (with one notable exception) lasted for about half a day, so I spent less time in court – and the associate's duties in court are split between the two other associates (as your judge will typically be one of three judges on the coram).

Aside from court, Court of Appeal associates' duties typically include:

- preparing materials and files for their judges and for other chambers;
- drafting memos (what this entails varies from chambers to chambers - some judges will like a brief precis of the key arguments in a particular appeal, while others will like a more extensive memo on the background of the appeal);
- proofing judgments, and
- some administrative tasks.

Why should you do an associateship?

To my mind, there are two main benefits to doing an associateship.

First, working so closely with your judge allows you to build a close relationship with them. Many judges remain valued mentors for their former associates, even many years after their associateship. You also gain an insight into how judges think: both how they approach questions involving the black letter of the law and also their views on what constitutes good advocacy and good 'lawyering'.

Secondly, it is an excellent way to gain exposure to advocacy early on in your career. Aside from the intellectual stimulation, the real benefit of that, in my view, is that you see firsthand that there are as many advocacy styles as there are advocates: you don't need to look, or talk, or sound a certain way to be an effective advocate. It somewhat demystifies advocacy, too, which makes it (slightly) less scary when you first start doing your own court appearances.

LIFE IN ACADEMIA

Dr Jacinta Dharmananda

When I graduated from Law School, I had no intention of ever studying again. I wanted to get good training as a lawyer with a good law firm, earn money and then, as soon as possible, use my degree as a ticket to work overseas. Experiencing life outside of Perth was my top priority.

That plan worked for a while. I started at a good firm, got a couple of years under my belt in Perth in a practice area that I thought would be transferrable overseas (corporate finance) and then spent the next decade or so moving around. I was a recipient of a 'young professionals' scholarship to learn Japanese in Tokyo followed by a role as an in-house lawyer in a Japanese oil company, briefly came back to Perth for 12 months with a law firm and then worked as a lawyer, in chronological order, in Melbourne, New York, Singapore and back to Tokyo. I got all of these jobs using my UWA law degree, my developing commercial law experience and what I like to think of as a pretty strong work ethic.

But life happens and priorities change. For family reasons, I found myself back in Perth in the 2000s and unsure about what to do. I wasn't ready to return to private practice (hopefully things have changed a bit, but combining small children and private practice was not so easy then). A serendipitous meeting with the then Dean of the Law School provided me with an opportunity to tutor in what is now Foundations of Law and Lawyering. That was the unconventional start to my Life in Academia. Despite never dreaming that I would return to UWA as a student, academic or anything, there I was.

It took a few years, as I took on more responsibilities, for me to decide that an academic career was something that I wanted to pursue. But having made that decision I have not looked back. And my time in practice has been really useful. In fact, I would encourage anyone thinking about an academic career to spend some time in practice first – it helps give what you teach and research a practical context.

Many people don't realise that being an academic is not just about teaching. That is certainly an important and obvious part, but the reason we are called 'academics' is because of our scholarship. That is why now you will need a PhD (or at least be on your way to getting a PhD) for an academic career.

There is a lot of pressure to develop a reputation as a well-regarded scholar in a particular area. Like many a practising lawyer will eventually wish to be known for their expertise in a certain practice area, that is the ultimate goal for an academic too. A university will expect you to publish regularly, to develop a reputation that leads to opportunities to disseminate your research and, eventually, to use that reputation to build industry links and secure external funding. In addition to teaching and research, a university will also expect you to perform what is called 'service' – such as giving CPDs to the legal profession, undertaking peer review of journal submissions, and contributing to your school and university through service roles (such as a Deputy Head or Director role) or committee or board membership.

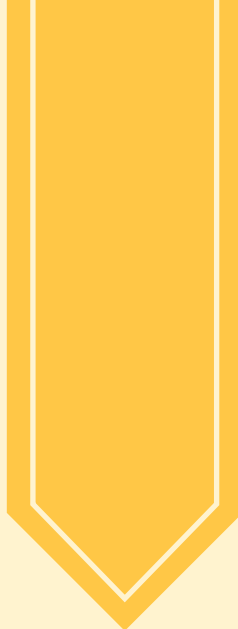
A lot of people don't really know about these

A lot of people don't really know about these three-pronged aspects to being an academic. Even some of my family members still assume that if the teaching semester is finished then I must be on holiday! But we get 4 weeks holiday a year like most other people in Australia and we mainly use non-teaching times to focus on producing research output.

What do I enjoy? Despite my young graduate self's misgivings, I love the continuous learning and thinking involved in striving to produce meaningful scholarship and essentially having my own little research business. I enjoy getting to know students, the amazing feeling when a student says that you have helped them, opportunities to liaise with the legal profession and other academics, and some flexibility around how I structure my work hours. I even still get to travel a bit, though opportunities to participate in conferences and other forums interstate and internationally will depend on your research area.

Just like any job, Life in Academia has its ups and downs. What is less enjoyable? Large universities tend to be bureaucratic and multi-layered institutions. In a nutshell, I don't wake up energised to tackle the administration work and process driven structures.

But perhaps most importantly of all, remember that when you graduate from Law School the decisions you make about where to work or live absolutely don't have to define the rest of your career or life. You might be surprised. Maybe you will, despite all your plans and expectations when you graduate, find yourself back at a university like me!



LIFE AS A BARRISTER

Ben Tomasi, Barrister at Francis Burt Chambers

Life at the Bar is interesting, varied, and above all, a great way to practise law. Practising as a barrister is challenging, rewarding, and collegiate. One fantastic thing about the Bar is that there is no single way to make your way here, nor is there a right way to conduct your practice (other than ethically, of course). I hope this piece gives you an insight into the many and varied pathways that one can take to end up practising as a barrister. I also hope it causes some of you reading this to turn their mind to the possibility that it could be for you.

By way of personal example, I was admitted to practice in 2016 and worked as a lawyer at the SSO, a judge's associate, and a solicitor in a law firm before joining the bar in 2021. I also completed a postgraduate degree in 2020. Although my path here was not a completely straight line, I always had a reasonably firm idea that I would practice as a barrister. But that is just one path.

My friends and colleagues have, variously:

- spent decades in private practice in firms before joining the Bar as senior lawyers;
- prosecuted on behalf of State and Commonwealth prosecuting agencies;
- practiced as government lawyers for the State or Commonwealth (including working for Legal Aid);
- lived and worked in remote parts of the State doing important work for vulnerable communities, including working for the Aboriginal Legal Service;
- practiced and studied interstate and overseas, sometimes for extended periods;
- worked as judges' associates; and
- worked for Western Australian, national

and international law firms.

People come to the bar at all levels of seniority, from just out of restricted practice, to retiring from the partnership of a firm. Some never dreamed of being self-employed or standing in court making submissions. Ultimately, there is no ideal time to join, but there is an ideal time for you having regard to family and personal circumstances. Similarly, there is no one skill that is needed to be good barrister, other than a capacity for industry and affability (i.e. work hard and be nice to people). A background in litigation and dispute resolution is helpful, but not essential, although there is some degree of self-selection in coming to Bar, as those who do join tend to have at least an interest in the area.

In years gone by, the Perth Bar was a place for lawyers who had already developed their skills as specialist advocates. That generally entailed some degree of seniority. In more recent years, however, that has not been the case. The people joining the Bar are increasingly junior practitioners who would like to become advocates but do not get the opportunities to deploy those skills while working as employed solicitors.

In order to become a barrister in Western Australia, you must first be admitted to practice and then have completed your restricted practice period. The result is a minimum of three years between starting employment and coming to the Bar, though generally you would want to have five or so years under your belt before making the move.

What do you need to think about before coming to the Bar?

- First, you need to have a plan. Think about the type of work you want to do, and where it will come from. Who will be instructing you? Why would they instruct you? What practice areas do you want to focus on?
- Secondly, what existing relationships do you have with practitioners that could help you develop a practice? There tend to be three sources of work for junior barristers: referrals from other juniors, briefs with silks, and unled instructions from firms. To start with, it is likely the first source will be the most significant. Over time, the second and third might become more prominent in your practice.
- Thirdly, how will you deal with the pressures of being self-employed? Things like cash flow, managing expenses, your tax affairs, not to mention the demands that it can place on your personal life, all need to factor into a decision to come to the Bar.

These matters are all some years ahead of you. But there are things you can do now, as you embark on your respective careers, to leave the option open for the future. They include getting to court as frequently as possible, working on a variety of matters, spending time in challenging environments, and being open to whatever opportunities present themselves for professional development. Above all, the most important thing is to build a strong network of friends in the profession. Ultimately, if you do join the Bar, you will be reliant on other practitioners to send you work. It's a lot easier for a solicitor to brief a barrister who she or he likes.

Best of luck whatever path you go down, and please get in touch if you are thinking about the Bar.

LIFE AS A CRIMINAL DEFENCE LAWYER

Arina Mundy, Legal Practice Director at Chambers Legal

My career in criminal law began with a naïve dream to “change the world” and fight for the wrongly accused underdog. I was 16 when, as part of a school excursion, we went to see Estelle Blackburn talk about her book *Broken Lives*. The book was about murders in Perth in the 1960s and (more importantly) about her involvement in the exoneration of two wrongly-convicted men who were imprisoned for crimes they did not commit. One of the lawyers involved in the appeal hearing which resulted in the two men being exonerated and released was Tom Percy KC (more on this later).

After doing an extremely sub-par job at university, I thought my dreams of being a criminal defence lawyer were all but crushed but, through a friend of a friend, I was told to contact Tom at Albert Wolff Chambers to see if he was looking for a clerk. I ended up doing some casual work at Albert Wolff, before being offered the full-time grad position in 2013. This ended up being one of the best years of my career and where I learnt the most. I worked for three different barristers, including Tom, and for the most part of the year I was helping with jury trials. Some were high profile, some were minor, some involved travelling around the state to different courts. I met a lot of solicitors working in criminal law and was ultimately offered a job by one of them when I was admitted to practice.

In 2014, I started work as a lawyer in a criminal defence firm. I still remember my very first court appearance in the Perth Magistrates Court (on day 4 of being a lawyer) where I had to get my supervisor to write down word for

word exactly what I had to say. Of course, it didn't go exactly to plan and the Magistrate asked a question about a previous hearing which I had no idea about. And that is how I learnt about “I don't have instructions on that”, about your option to “stand the matter down” to phone a friend and that the Magistrates Court is really not that scary but it helps to know the process and everything that has happened in the particular case so far.

I continued working in the same firm for four years. I was regularly briefing the same barristers I worked for previously (and one was appointed a Judge of the District Court at that time). I also met a lot of other criminal lawyers. One of the main things about being a criminal lawyer is that you either know everyone else or at least know of them. Your circle of friends ends up being mostly other criminal lawyers and often going to court is an opportunity to catch up either while you're waiting to get called on, or just getting a coffee afterwards. It is important to have a network of people you can call if it's to talk something through, or discuss an ethical dilemma.

I was exposed to a variety of criminal matters. I instructed on jury trials and did my own Magistrates Court trials. Some of those cases shaped my approach to work and difficult files, and some made me question whether I really wanted to continue working in the criminal justice system. But I made it through the tough times and figured out how to stop being so sensitive and to leave work at work.

Apparently, I also developed a “client voice” which my family had never heard before and is a lot more assertive than my usual one!

In late 2017, I met up with a school friend for lunch. She told me she was thinking of starting her own firm and I thought that's a cool idea. I resigned from my job exactly two weeks later. Together, we opened our firm in Subiaco in February 2018 and this is still the most spontaneous and best thing I have ever done.

So what does the day in the life of a criminal lawyer look like? The "every day is different" cliché is somewhat true. Every case is different, the clients are all different and the defences are all different.

Usually, the day starts with a court appearance (or several) in one of the various metro courts either for a procedural hearing, to list a trial or for a sentencing. After that, you are back in the office meeting with clients to prepare for future hearings or trials, reviewing disclosure, preparing advice, plea offers or submissions for court.

Some weeks, you are in trials which can take a few days or a few weeks. In addition to providing legal advice, you also regularly find yourself being a counsellor or confidant to clients who are struggling with the court proceedings and charges against them, and sometimes you are the bearer of important messages (last week we had to call our client's mum to tell her he was in jail unexpectedly and could she feed his dog please).

At the end of the day, it's an important job to be able to represent a variety of clients with charges that range from very minor, to very sensitive to very serious. Some accept they are guilty, and some maintain their innocence

and you must do your best to guide them through the system and get them the best possible outcome. Yes, you will constantly get asked by random people "but how do you do it" and "but what if they're guilty" and eventually you find a way to answer these questions without rolling your eyes.

In conclusion, if you find yourself being interested in pursuing a career as a criminal lawyer, I would suggest reading Estelle Blackburn's book "The End of Innocence" (which is a book about how she wrote the book "Broken Lives" and more interesting from a lawyer perspective), reach out to barristers and solicitors to see if you can do some work experience and take any opportunity you can get to meet people in the field.

LIFE AS A FAMILY LAWYER

Samuel Dulyba, Family Lawyer at Mills Oakley

By way of brief introduction, I am a family lawyer working at Mills Oakley and serve as the Secretary of the Family Law Practitioners' Association of Western Australia ("FLPAWA"). While I was always drawn to family law, I did not settle into the field immediately upon graduating from uni. I spent time rotating through the family law, insurance and property teams at Mills Oakley as part of the graduate program prior to settling in family law in March of 2023.

However, I have always been attracted to family law because of the inescapable human element.

I found it particularly motivating knowing that I would be acting for human clients for who there would be tangible consequences, and whose lives I could positively impact as a result.

Despite the many iterations of "wait...you chose to settle in family law?" that I received from my peers, I can say that my original attraction to the field was well-founded.

As I suspected, I love the interpersonal element of family law, being able to meet with clients and to witness the direct impact of my work. My love for that interpersonal element has grown into a passion for advocacy, especially in the courtroom.

Much of the work in family law involves substantive drafting, be it correspondence or court documents, client management, and attendance at court. Family law exposes you to meaningful and engaging legal work at an early stage, and you progress quickly due to the level of responsibility that you can adopt

early on.

From the beginning, many family lawyers are already attending court, even if it is for procedural matters, and you are usually involved in drafting affidavits, minutes of orders, and important legal letters from the beginning.

After now beginning to make my own appearances in Court, I can confidently say my passion for advocacy will only continue to grow.

I would be lying if I did not also mention how much I enjoy the unpredictability of family law. There is something so engaging in how everyday can present new challenges based on very human issues – not to mention the drama.

However, an essential element of my affinity with family law is the collegiality of the profession – or, "the vibes".

My time on the FLPWA committee, and now executive, has also provided me with great opportunities to be involved with my colleagues and contribute to the profession. I believe the most important lesson I have learnt (so far) can be summarised in the following quote, of which I have heard many variations and am unsure of the original source:

"A smart person learns from their mistakes. A wise person learns from the mistakes of others."

That is, I have learnt the importance of not only seeking out great mentors, but sincerely

incorporating their feedback and example. I have been very fortunate to be mentored by some of the best in the profession, including Kym Kerr, Anastasia Christou.

I have seen how valuable it is to be able to tap into their wealth of experience and knowledge while gaining my bearings in the field.

If you are considering embarking on your own journey to become a family lawyer, I would say: try to always remember the subject matter of family law. For the most part, we are dealing with people who need help navigating the legal consequences of the end of their relationships. For them, this will understandably be a very difficult part of their lives and they will likely be emotionally charged and sometimes even volatile. As a consequence, confronting experiences in one form or another are inherent to family law. Put in the universally accepted family law mantra, “we are dealing with good people at their worst.”

The first thing we can learn from this appreciation is that we need to develop healthy ways of dealing with and growing from these experiences. We are fortunate to be stepping into the profession at a time when the mental health of practitioners is treated seriously and there is increasing support available. Do not be hesitant in seeking assistance when needed.

Second, as we become more experienced, we will be playing an increasingly active role in assisting already struggling clients in determining the course of their legal matters.

Meaning that we can be either an immense help, or a serious hindrance. We need to ensure our own egos do not make the process more difficult than it needs to be.

Finally, we need to understand the limits of the part we play in the lives of our clients. While it is inevitable that we will be moved by a client’s circumstances, we are not engaged as psychologists or best friends. We need to be able to step away at the end of the day and recognise that their personal problems are not our own.



Ethan Ryan

2025 Graduate

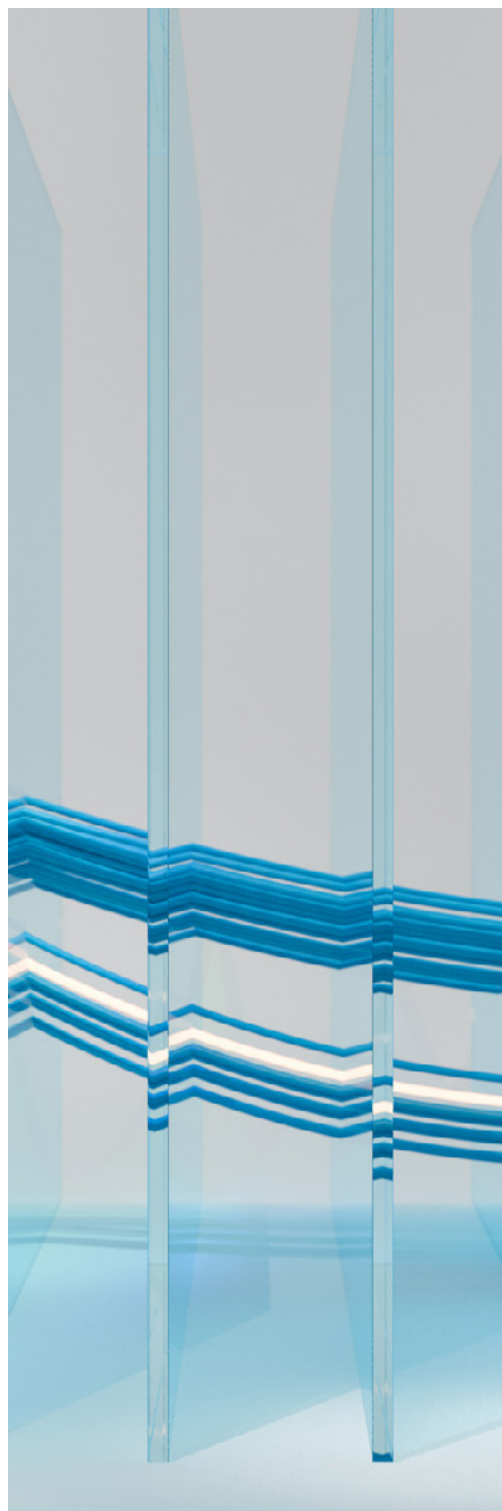
Since starting at G+T in February 2025 (only one month ago from when I am writing this), there is already much to tell.

In my first two weeks, I attended an intensive course at the College of Law, a provider of the Practical Legal Training course required for admission, which is paid by G+T. While, as you can imagine, this course is not exactly Netflix-worthy, it was an amazing opportunity for me to bond with the other six graduates in my cohort, and ultimately, allowed me to knock off three out of seven units. Having been away from the law since June 2024, these two weeks also allowed me to “lock in” and get myself ready for full time work.

In my third week, my cohort and I were flown to Sydney for the 2025 National Graduate Induction, held at G+T’s Sydney office in Barangaroo. At this 3-day induction, we were welcomed by Danny Gilbert (founding Partner), Sam Nickless (CEO) and many other senior partners, who all gave us a fascinating insight into the business, agenda, and trajectory of G+T as a top-tier national law firm. We were also given fantastic training by a variety of partners, lawyers, and support staff which provided an excellent foundation for starting work as a graduate. My key takeaway from the induction was just how significant the impact of AI technology will be on the legal field and how well-placed G+T is to be a leader in its utilisation and development, with the firm already investing in Harvey, its own Gilbot AI, and many other AI tools.

In my fourth week, I started work in the Energy, Resources + Infrastructure team. I was introduced to my support network (Partner, Senior Associate, and Lawyer), who have already been providing me with interesting work on complex mineral titles transactions, including drafting agreements, assisting with due diligence, and advising on completion. Outside of the day-to-day, I have already been able to get involved with the firm’s culture, attending G+T Perth’s Bi-Monthly Offsite Drinks at Lil’s, representing the firm in the YLC Beach Volleyball Competition, and joining the firm’s social committee.

If that is only one month, I am very excited to see what the next 17 months of the Graduate Program will look like!



LIFE AT A GLOBAL LAW FIRM

Siena Casgrain, Graduate at Clifford Chance

I was drawn to Clifford Chance for its global reach, integrated partnership and position as one of the world's largest global law firms. During my Graduate Program, I completed four rotations of six months each, including an overseas secondment, where I travelled and worked on high-impact matters across multiple jurisdictions.

Global Financial Markets Bootcamp

My journey began with an eye-opening Global Financial Markets (GFM) bootcamp in Perth. Over a week of intense training, led by partners and senior associates from across Australia, I gained both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in leveraged finance, project finance, general banking and restructuring. Beyond the technical training, the bootcamp was a great opportunity to build relationships with colleagues from across the country, demonstrating the firm's collaborative spirit both in Australia and across the Asia Pacific region.

Later in the program, I worked on a cross-border transaction led by our German offices, coordinating with teams across Europe, the U.S., Singapore, Japan and Australia. The seamless collaboration across time zones was a testament to the firm's global strength.

Litigation and Dispute Resolution Rotation

In my second rotation, I joined the Sydney Litigation and Dispute Resolution team, working on a diverse range of disputes from early-stage resolution to high-profile commercial litigation. One notable matter involved a UK commercial case, where team members flew to London to assist with the

trial. I also attended a team offsite in South Australia, where we participated in a treasure hunt around Adelaide and its wine country, a great way to bond with colleagues while learning more about the firm's goals.

Next Stop: London!

My third rotation took me to the London Capital Markets team, where I worked on equity and debt capital markets, structured finance and complex restructuring transactions. The training was invaluable, from an intensive 3-day finance overview to focused sessions on capital markets issues. I gained exposure to matters involving Sharia law and had the chance to attend client events, like trivia nights and art exhibitions, building meaningful relationships with both clients and colleagues.

Final Rotation: Sydney

My final rotation was with the Sydney Corporate team, working on private and public M&A and real estate funds transactions. A standout experience was the APAC Corporate offsite in Bangkok, where we connected with colleagues over dinners, a pool party, and a city-wide treasure hunt that immersed us in Thai culture.

Conclusion

As a Graduate at Clifford Chance, you're part of a truly global network, engaging in market-leading, cross-border legal work while forming lasting professional relationships. The Graduate Program has fast-tracked my legal development and set the foundation for a deeply rewarding career with the firm.

LIFE AS A NATIVE TITLE LAWYER

Catinca Hozoc-Martin, Lawyer at Austwide Legal Pty Ltd

Reflections on a Career in Mining and Native Title Law

My name is Catinca Hozoc-Martin, and I have been practising law for four years. For me, working as a lawyer is both a privilege and a responsibility; particularly in the dynamic, complex, and deeply meaningful area of Mining and Native Title Law.

I graduated from Murdoch University in February 2020, arguably one of the most difficult times for any law graduate to enter the profession. With the legal job market in a freeze due to the pandemic, it took nearly a year to secure my first graduate lawyer role. In January 2021, I joined a community legal centre, where I began working in native title law. This formative experience allowed me to build a strong foundation in legal practice, work directly with Indigenous communities, and gain a deep appreciation for the cultural and legal significance of land rights - and the impact that mining can have on them.

One of the most memorable moments in my early career involved conducting a witness interview beneath a tree in the Pilbara, sharing fresh mangoes from a client's garden - while the rest of the legal team remained in Perth. It was a powerful reminder that legal practice, at its core, is about human connection beyond the courtroom.

After three years in that role, I transitioned into private practice at a small firm in Perth's north, where I continue to work in Mining and Native Title Law. My day-to-day involves a wide variety of tasks, including commercial

contract drafting, legal research, and client representation before the Warden's Court and the National Native Title Tribunal. It is a stimulating and fast-paced environment that keeps me constantly learning and growing. (And yes - my coffee consumption has increased significantly. I've come to believe the legal industry runs on deadlines and caffeine!)

What I love most about this area of law is its variety and scope. No two days are the same, and I feel fortunate to work on matters that are both legally complex and socially significant. For any law graduate considering commercial law, I would strongly encourage exploring the path of Native Title and Mining Law. It offers not only intellectual challenge and career diversity, but also the opportunity to engage with remote Indigenous communities, travel across this incredible State, and make a genuine impact.

LIFE AT THE STATE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

Isabel Inkster, Solicitor at State Solicitor's Office

Introduction

I am a Solicitor at the State Solicitor's Office (SSO), having commenced in January 2020. Prior to this, I served as Associate to the Honourable Justice McGrath at the Supreme Court of Western Australia. I completed my Juris Doctor at the University of Western Australia (UWA). I am also a sessional academic at the UWA Law School, so some students may remember me from such units as 'LAWS5101 Constitutional Law' and 'LAWS5102 Administrative Law'.

I'm grateful to the Blackstone Society for the opportunity to share my experience of working at the SSO.

In several respects, the graduate role at the SSO differs fundamentally from those in commercial firms. I will endeavour to summarise some of these differences and opportunities to help inform your decision about whether to apply for an SSO clerkship and/or graduate role.

Work of the SSO

The SSO provides legal advice to the State of Western Australia, comprising its departments, agencies and officers. The SSO represents the State in an array of courts, tribunals, and other decision-making bodies. As the needs of the Government change, so does the legal advice sought. This results in a dynamic and varied workplace, offering opportunities to engage in unique and challenging work.

Practice Areas

The SSO is divided into six practice areas: Commercial, Civil Litigation and Public and

General Litigation, Counsel, Native Title and State Lands (NTSL), and Advice, Policy and Public Law (APPL). Below is a brief overview of each:

- **Commercial:** Involves contracts, leases, projects, intellectual property, conveyancing, acquisitions, and disputes. Unique aspects include work related to State Agreements, commercial litigation involving the State and large infrastructure projects undertaken by the State government.
- **Litigation:** The largest group within the SSO, split into Civil Litigation and Public and General Litigation. The work includes summary court prosecutions, personal injury claims, administrative review, coronial inquests, medical negligence, industrial relations, and workers' compensation, to name but a few.
- **Counsel:** Functions like an in-house Bar, comprising the most experienced advocates who appear in complex and sensitive matters in various courts, including the Supreme Court of Western Australia, the Federal Court of Australia, and the High Court of Australia.
- **NTSL:** Advises and represents the State Government in matters involving Crown land, including public and private land assembly for infrastructure works, town planning, and resources tenements. It also advises on Native Title agreements and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage matters.
- **APPL:** Provides specialised advice to the government legislative reform, statutory interpretation, matters involving the Constitution and more. APPL lawyers often assist with matters which are

currently before parliament, including by contributing to draft responses to parliamentary questions and providing advice to select committees.

The SSO also offers opportunities for secondments to other agencies, such as the Western Australia Police Force and the Office of the Attorney-General. Specialised teams within practice groups also handle specific subject areas, such as the High Risk Serious Offenders Act 2020 (WA) and the Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act 2023 (WA).

The variety is one of the great benefits of working at the SSO, and also one of the reasons why the work can be so challenging. In any given day I will be working across several jurisdictions, in a multitude of areas of law.

The Law Graduate Role

The Law Graduate role is a one-year position for those who have not yet commenced legal practice, typically recent graduates from law school or those who have completed an associateship. The year involves rotating through each practice area (outlined above) and shadowing restricted practitioners (i.e. colleagues one year above), with comprehensive training, including targeted advocacy training towards the end of the year. Graduates undertake varied and interesting work, attend hearings and client meetings, and develop their skills. If not already admitted as a lawyer, the year includes completing Practical Legal Training.

One of the key attractions of a career at the SSO is the opportunity to engage in oral

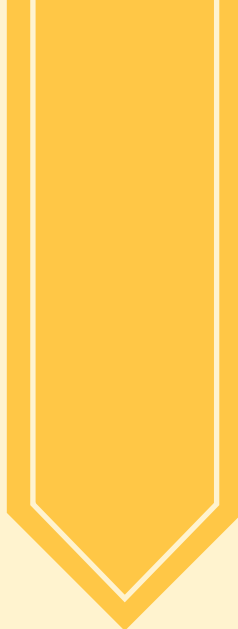
advocacy from the start. Law Graduates appear in court during their first year, and manage their own files from the second year. This structure builds confidence and advocacy skills with the support of senior practitioners. The graduate year is an opportunity to learn, engage with new areas of law, and develop legal skills. The Office is full of approachable, inspiring, and impressive individuals who are generous with their time and energy to support you along the way.

Upon completing the graduate year, you enter 'Cohort' years as a restricted practitioner, taking on your own files while continuing to work across various practice groups. Unlike commercial firms, you generally do not settle in a practice area until three years after your graduate year, allowing ample time to find the work that most interests you. However, the cohort system is flexible and can cater to those who wish to settle in a practice area, based on their specific interests and strengths.

Clerkships and Graduate Positions

The SSO offers two-week paid clerkships and a one-year Law Graduate program. Recruitment occurs annually, following a similar timeframe to commercial firms. These programs are advertised on [Jobs.wa.gov.au](https://www.jobs.wa.gov.au) as well as the SSO LinkedIn Page.

If any of the above resonates with you, I highly recommend applying for a clerkship or Law Graduate position at the State Solicitor's Office.



LIFE AT THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Kelsey Howen, State Prosecutor at the ODPP

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions ('ODPP') is the independent prosecuting authority for the State of Western Australia and is responsible for the prosecution of serious offences committed against State criminal law.

I started working at the ODPP in March 2022. I initially started as a 1LG Legal Officer in the Children's Court Team. In May 2024, I was appointed as a 2LG State Prosecutor in the adult jurisdiction.

As a State Prosecutor I perform a dual role. Part of my role is as a solicitor. When a serious crime occurs, the ODPP receives all the evidence in relation to the charge from WA Police. My job is to look at the evidence and to assess whether the correct charge has been laid, and whether there is enough evidence to prove the charge. As a State Prosecutor, the term 'elements of the offence' is part of my day-to-day, rather than words I kind of remember from Criminal Law in Semester 1. This part of the role also provides the opportunity to work closely with WA Police officers, as well as with victims of crime and defence solicitors. Good people skills are essential, and as a State Prosecutor you quickly become adept at managing a number of competing interests.

The other part of my role as a State Prosecutor is as a barrister. One of the advantages of coming to the ODPP is that you are fast-tracked to appearing as counsel in court. Legal Officers tend to start by appearing on simple matters in the Magistrates Court but will

quickly progress to appearing on sentencing hearings and other more complex matters in the District Court. Early in your career at the ODPP you will also have the opportunity to be junior counsel on complex matters which go to trial in the District Court and Supreme Court. Junior counsel work alongside more experienced State Prosecutors to assist with all aspects of running a trial, with the goal being that eventually you will be able to run your own trials. If advocacy is something that you are interested in and you want to do a lot of it, I would highly recommend considering a career in criminal law.

As a State Prosecutor you are engaged daily in interesting work, and that work involves working with or alongside a diverse range of members of the community. No two days are the same, and the work, while hard, tends to be extremely rewarding. However, in criminal law you are often dealing with members of the public who are going through the worst period of their lives. The content can be difficult, and vicarious trauma is very real. This is on top of the relatively high workload, which is a feature of most legal roles. I don't say that to put anyone off – the highs tend to balance out the lows, and the ODPP has a great group of colleagues who support each other through tough times, as well as more substantive mental health supports. It is just something to consider when weighing up your career path.

Turning to the recruitment process (because, if you have made it this far in my article, I assume that is what you are interested in);

the ODPP is slightly different from other traditional law firms and organisations as there is no graduate program. The ODPP hires lawyers at the 1LG Legal Officer level. To apply for a 1LG position, you must be admitted or be eligible to be admitted within a time proximate to the recruitment period. That means that you have to have already completed your PLT.

There are no set criteria in terms of the pathway to being a 1LG Legal Officer. A number of people tend to be recruited from the courts, having previously worked in judicial support type roles. For example, before working at the ODPP I worked as an Usher to a Judge at the District Court. This role allowed me to see the behind the scenes of life at the court while completing my PLT at the same time. However, Legal Officers tend to come from a diverse array of backgrounds, including people who have never previously worked in criminal law. If you are appointed as a Legal Officer, no matter your background, you will be closely mentored and developed to ensure that you are capable of managing your files and appearing in court.

If you want to work in criminal law, the ODPP (in my humble opinion) is the best place to start your career. The training and opportunities for development as a criminal lawyer are unmatched. Beyond that, being a State Prosecutor is a privilege. While it sounds trite, it is something that I am constantly reminded of. The work is interesting and meaningful, and you are performing an essential service for the public. It is extremely fulfilling, and if it is something you are interested in, I would definitely recommend it as a career path.

LIFE AS A WILLS AND ESTATES LAWYER

Matthew Petriwskyj, Associate at Culshaw Miller Lawyers

Hi everyone,

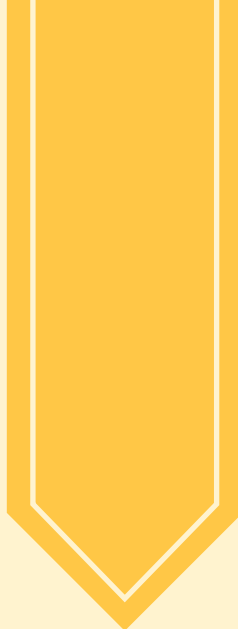
As a short introduction, I am an associate at Culshaw Miller Lawyers. I predominantly work in Wills and Estates and have since I was admitted just over 3 years ago. Before this, I worked in a full-service boutique firm during law school where I got exposure to many areas of law, which was invaluable to me when navigating life post-admission.

Why did I choose Wills and Estates you might ask? Well, it's surely not a glamorous area of law akin to the high-rollers you see on the likes of "Suits". In saying that, it is a really rewarding area of law where you get to help people during what is sometimes their most difficult time in their life.

No two days are the same for me. One day I could be drafting complex estate planning documents for a high net-worth client, or the other I could be helping a grieving widow navigate the legalities of losing their spouse of over 60 years. My practice also requires me to interact with other areas of law such as property law, contracts, trusts and equity. This hand-on front-of-house experience means I have learnt things that never could have been replicated in law school.

This is definitely an area of law where people skills and emotional intelligence are a must. Your clients are not business-savvy companies seeking advice on a big transaction – they are people with interesting and intricate backgrounds and you will most definitely come across stories so wild you literally could not make up.

If you're not sure what area you might want to practise in or do with your degree, my advice would be to consider venturing outside of your comfort zone. There might just be a niche area of law waiting out there for you that you have never considered working in, or maybe never even knew existed. Working in the law can be whatever you make of your hard-earned studies and expertise. It is totally okay to change your mind or decide you need a change of scenery - the beauty of our profession is that there are so many opportunities out there for you!



MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS AT A GLOBAL FIRM

Jasper Johnson - Senior Associate, Mergers & Acquisitions, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer

THE PATH TO HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS KRAMER

The usual path to a Graduate position at HSF Kramer is through the clerkship program, where penultimate year students spend four weeks working closely with lawyers and Partners on real matters.

After clerkships you'll be left with the important decision of choosing where to start your legal career. For me, this decision was made easy when I considered what each firm offered me. So, what did HSF Kramer offer? It was the opportunity to work with incredibly smart and dedicated people who constantly encourage you to become the best lawyer you can be. The firm emphasises professional development at its core and will have you working alongside market-leading experts on exciting and high-profile matters from day one. The firm is truly international – with 24 integrated offices around the world, almost every matter has some international element, which is perfect if you have an interest in the commercial world beyond Australia.

LIFE AS A GRADUATE

Graduate lawyers at HSF Kramer complete three six-month rotations in different practice groups. During my time as a Graduate I rotated through Banking & Finance (Perth), Mergers & Acquisitions (Perth) and Mergers & Acquisitions (Singapore).

HSF Kramer Graduates are key members of the teams they rotate through. In this role

they may attend Court, draft core commercial contracts, join client meetings and calls, research niche legal points, review market practice, assist with writing legal advice, and take responsibility for coordinating elements of a transaction. In addition to legal work, Graduates organise and attend fun events, become deeply involved in the firm's various community initiatives, and represent the firm at business development events.

A key difference between law school and working at a global law firm like HSF is that you are advising real people that are facing real problems – often involving millions of dollars and complex commercial pressures – with no clear answer. This can be scary, but it is also what motivates you to consistently do your best and learn from those around you.

HSF Kramer goes to great lengths to create an environment where Graduates are encouraged to think independently, commercially and creatively. From day one, Graduates are allocated a Supervising Partner, Senior Associate and Solicitor ('buddy') who are each individually responsible for providing coaching and mentorship. The informal and frequent discussions with these people (as well as the broader team) creates an immediate and organic feedback loop, which allows Graduates to continuously grow and learn from their successes and mistakes. You'll be surprised how much you will learn in your first year.

WORKING INTERNATIONALLY AS A GRADUATE

At HSF Kramer, all Graduates have the opportunity to apply for an international secondment for their third (or optional fourth) rotation. I completed my third rotation in our Singapore office in the Mergers & Acquisition team.

HSF Kramer's international rotations are incredible opportunities to slingshot your career by expanding your network and putting your legal skills to the test in new sectors and markets. My time in Singapore saw me working on massive cross-border transactions with leading lawyers from all around the world.

LIFE AFTER THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Once you have completed your Graduate rotations you are left with the important decision of where to 'settle' (read: permanently join a practice group). HSF Kramer has a large number of practice groups which means that Graduates tend to have a lot of settling opportunities. I was personally drawn to Mergers & Acquisitions because it allows me to work on high-profile corporate transactions that are transformative for our clients, and it provides the right balance (for me) between commercial strategy and legal analysis.

WORKING IN MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Mergers & Acquisitions broadly involves advising clients on their acquisitions and divestments, which are usually major strategic events for a business. Lawyers play a key role in this process from the initial structuring phase through to implementation. As part of the role, lawyers analyse and advise on

legal risks and structures, conduct thorough due diligence, draft and negotiate complex agreements (e.g. share sale agreements), and ensure compliance with various regulatory frameworks. Working in M&A allows you to gain exposure to corporate strategy and growth, making it an exciting and rewarding career path.

At HSF Kramer Perth, the Mergers & Acquisitions team also advises on equity capital market transactions (assisting corporate clients to raise money via equity subscriptions), joint ventures, commercial contracts, mining, and also provides general corporate and regulatory advice. This broad mix of work means there is a lot of variety in the team and no two days are the same.

I would strongly encourage law students with an interest in corporate strategy / finance to consider a career in M&A.

For further information about the recruitment process at Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer, please contact Beth.Soliman@hsf.com.

WORKING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW

Tim Beckett, Partner at McLeods

McLeods Lawyers is a boutique law firm which primarily practices in local government law. The firm was founded in 1980 by Denis McLeod, a pre-eminent town planning lawyer who was recognised as the Law Society Lawyer of the Year in 2012 and was recognised with an Order of Australia award in 2024 for significant service to the law, urban planning, and the community of Western Australia.

McLeods represents the majority of local governments in Western Australia, with established practice areas in planning and environment law, governance, administrative law, property, commercial litigation, and prosecutions and compliance.

Representing local government clients presents a unique challenge, as local governments provide a variety of essential public services for ratepayers and are required to administer a broad range of statutory functions for the community.

Local governments have important functions as decision-makers and permit authorities, culminating in frequent administrative review proceedings in the State Administrative Tribunal. In particular, McLeods has a strong reputation in town planning and environmental law, as local governments are at the forefront of implementing planning and development controls within Western Australia.

Local governments are also responsible for administering substantial projects and services within their districts, which can give rise to complex contractual disputes and commercial property transactions. These

types of matters may result in litigation and/or dispute resolution proceedings in a number of different jurisdictions.

McLeods also has a well-established practice in governance, as the functions and responsibilities of councils and councillors are strictly regulated under the Local Government Act 1995 and local governments must be transparent and accountable in the exercise of their general functions. McLeods works closely with executives in local government and has had a close working relationship with Local Professionals WA for many years.

Local governments are also responsible for the enforcement of various legislation within its districts. This practice area includes more substantive and commercial matters – such as planning, building, food, and animals – and, for especially brave practitioners, other matters such as parking enforcement. McLeods frequently represents local governments in Magistrates Court prosecutions for matters of those types.

While the concept of ‘local government law’ represents a very narrow slice of the legal profession, local government clients require representation and advice in an extremely wide variety of practice areas. At McLeods, practitioners get to operate within a private law firm, acting for large clients whose legislative function is the good governance of their district. The work is challenging and rewarding and practitioners have a range of opportunities, which include advocacy, litigation, general advice, and commercial transactions.

In recent years, junior practitioners at McLeods have had the opportunity to appear as counsel frequently in the State Administrative Tribunal, Magistrates Court, and the Supreme Court. Junior practitioners are exposed to direct client contact at an early stage and are encouraged to work independently, to establish client relations and develop high level skills as quickly as possible.

McLeods will typically offer paid vacation clerkships at least once per year and has been active in employing graduates during the last 5 years.

When considering prospective clerks or graduates, McLeods prioritises strong problem-solving abilities, excellent interpersonal skills, and the ability to work independently.

10 THINGS I WISH I KNEW BEFORE MY CLERKSHIP

As a law student, you probably have lots of questions about clerkship programs. Clerkships offer invaluable first-hand experience and often act as a stepping stone to bigger things, with many people going on to graduate positions afterwards. We spoke with recent Allens graduates who offered up some great advice on things they wish they knew before beginning their clerkship.

Everyone wants you to succeed.

You aren't expected to know it all, and mistakes are a given and an important part of the learning process. We're here to support and guide you through your clerkship. Our firm is filled with excitement each time a new clerk cohort starts with us, so make the most of the enthusiasm! Be eager to learn, maintain a positive attitude and ask for feedback on your work. Our clerks are allocated a network of mentors who provide work, oversee your development, and support you during your time at the firm and beyond.

Partners are just regular people.

As a law student, you may feel intimidated by senior lawyers but just remember they were once in your shoes, remember what it's like, and are genuinely interested in you, your experiences as a student and relating to you person to person. Approach them just like you would any other person you encounter in a professional context.

Ask a lot of questions!

We don't expect you to know everything, but we do want to see that you are interested in learning. If you aren't sure about something, don't be afraid to ask a colleague. If you get lost halfway through a task, go back to the

person who gave you instructions – they will appreciate you checking in. It can be easy to waste time trying to figure something out yourself, when all it takes is a few minutes to ask a question and move a problem along.

Accept the coffee catch up.

Even if you've already had multiple coffees! (Get a tea or a decaf instead). Sometimes people overthink tasks and convince themselves they're too busy for a quick coffee, but in reality, you'll almost always have time. After all, getting to know your team is one of the most important parts of a clerkship, and doing so over a coffee is a great opportunity to ask questions.

Be open minded.

And enjoy the experience. Your clerkship is an opportunity to try a range of different work types, so keep an open mind and expose yourself to as much variety as possible. It's also a great opportunity to meet lawyers from all kinds of backgrounds, so don't be afraid to reach out. There's a lot of knowledge to be gained if you're open to receiving it.

Get involved!

As a firm, Allens has a strong commitment to driving change and shaping the future – in our clients' businesses and industries, in our communities, and in our own firm. There are endless opportunities for you to contribute and make a difference, so don't be afraid to follow your passions, put up your hand and take advantage of opportunities to get involved in the life of the firm.

Communication is key.

And it's important to speak up if you're unsure

about something or need help – all you need to do is ask! Our people are more than willing to assist as they've all been there before. It's important to remember you're part of our firm when you start as a clerk – we see you as our next graduates and lawyers, so don't be nervous to say hello and chat to your peers.

Recovery time is essential.

Ensure you're getting enough rest throughout your clerkship program. Navigating nerves and excitement in a new environment, combined with new learnings will mean you'll need down time and eight hours of sleep each night.

Write a list of everything you want to achieve.

It's important for your development that you are exposed to a number of pieces of work varying in nature and complexity throughout your clerkship. We encourage you to proactively ask for work and seek out feedback to ensure you're getting the most out of your experience.

Be yourself.

And the type of person you want to work with. We value authenticity and we want to work with clerks and graduates who value this too. Diverse perspectives help solve complex problems, strengthen teams and enrich client relationships. The more you enjoy working with a diverse range of people, the greater your success will be. It's easy to be intimidated by others who are naturally more extroverted, but if you're an introvert there is no need to pretend you are not. At the end of the day, being yourself will allow you to do your best work and forge the most authentic relationships. On the other hand, if you're an extrovert, embrace it and don't be afraid to let your voice and personality be heard! So there you have it – 10 things you now know before you begin your clerkship.





