



GUIDE TO LAW SCHOOL

The Murdoch Student Law Society (MSLS) is excited to welcome both new and returning students to the Murdoch School of Law. After a turbulent few years, we understand the need to provide a supportive community for our students. This guide will assist students in understanding the basic components of the law degree and other aspects of achieving admission into the profession. Importantly, this guide will provide an insight into the opportunities that the Murdoch Law School and MSLS provide to engage students and foster lifelong friendships and skills.

Editor in Chief - Tara Innes

Sonia Walker

Tiffany Allen

Ella Reynolds

Acknowledgement of Country

The Murdoch Student Law Society recognises the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation as the traditional owners and custodians of the land upon which the Society is constituted. We acknowledge the special and continuing connection to country held by the Noongar people and respect the knowledge and laws that traditional elders and Aboriginal people in this place hold and pass on from generation to generation. We regret that racial discrimination, arising from colonial rule, has been used to justify Indigenous dispossession, socio-economic repression, and the creation of a legal system that still to this day does not provide Indigenous people with equal access to justice..

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF LAW AND CRIMINOLOGY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SONIA WALKER



On behalf of the staff, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to Murdoch University and the School of Law and Criminology. We are all looking forward to working with you and assisting you to achieve your academic goals.

The cohort of new undergraduate and postgraduate students includes students studying Law, Criminology and Business Law. Many of our undergraduate students are enrolled in combined degrees. Whilst these degrees take a little longer to complete, they allow you to develop a broad range of skills and develop expertise across more than one discipline.

This year marks the start of some innovations in our LLB that will build on our strong focus on career-ready skills for our students. We are now running a Law and Technology unit which gives students an opportunity to understand how technology will influence legal practice in the future. The Criminology undergraduate and postgraduate courses also have technology focused units such as Cybercrime and Digital Forensics. These units will provide students with the opportunity to develop the technology and research skills that will be required for careers in the future. We will also continue our relationship with the Leo Cussen Centre and the College of Law so our LLB graduates can stay on campus, if they wish, to complete their practical legal training (PLT). PLT is a requirement for all LLB graduates planning to gain admission to practice.

A University education is about much more than attending/listening to classes and completing assessments. To gain the most from your time at University you should also pursue opportunities from the broad range of activities offered by your discipline, the School and the University. MSLS is particularly active in this regard and offers all students social, academic and career based activities. MSLS is one of the most active student societies on campus and I encourage you to get involved with MSLS as quickly as possible. You will have a lot more fun and enhance your academic skills and employability if you take the opportunity to participate in the extracurricular activities on offer.

In addition to the events offered by MSLS, we have an award winning Clinical Legal Education programme that offers hands-on client work for those who qualify. We also have a clinical unit on Law reform. With clinics, mooted units, law in the community and work integrated learning you will have increased opportunities for hands-on real world learning. Our mooted programme is run both by MSLS and by the School, with many of our students participating in mooted. We also offer international study opportunities in Geneva, Italy, Germany and India for LLB students when Covid allows. I am very pleased to be able to tell you that now international borders are open we are already making arrangements for our Geneva and Italian programmes to recommence. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is available across all disciplines and can include work with state and federal police, businesses, law firms and even consulates.

As you start your academic journey with us remember that you are now part of the Murdoch University and Law School community. We are here to help you, but your contribution is vital to your own success and to our success. Share your ideas with us, participate, and most importantly, come and talk to us if you feel you need assistance.

I wish you the best for 2023 and beyond and I look forward to meeting you during the course of your studies with us.

Associate Professor Sonia Walker
Dean of the School of Law and Criminology
School of Law
College of Arts, Business, Law and Social Sciences

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

ELLA REYNOLDS



Hi Everyone! Welcome to Law at Murdoch, we are so excited to have you on board! My name is Ella and I am the Murdoch Student Law Society (MSLS) President for 2023. I am a third year student and I study a Law and Criminology double degree.

I would like to congratulate you all for starting Law at Murdoch, it is such a rewarding subject to study and I hope you all find your first year enjoyable and engaging. Law school can be challenging and a bit daunting at first, but there are so many ways to make your time here special and rewarding!

We encourage you to get involved on campus and join MSLS for our events throughout the year! Make sure to come along to our social events, they are a great way to make new friends and chat to older students about their experiences. We offer a range of different social events, so you are sure to find one that suits you.

Competitions are another amazing way to get involved and build your skills and confidence. It was through competitions in my first year that I made lots of friends and was inspired to join the MSLS committee! Being able to practice skills in a safe environment has meant I've been able to perform better in assessments and have a deeper understanding of many areas of law.

MSLS is always looking for new faces to take on positions in our committee. I encourage you to get involved with the committee as we are a supportive and friendly group! We would love to have you and your ideas. So, if you are interested in joining our committee, either come down to the Law Cafe for a chat, or have a look at our socials for information about open positions.

I wish you all the best of luck with your first year, and I hope to see you around campus!

Ella Reynolds
President



WHO IS THE MSLS?

The Murdoch Student Law Society is Murdoch's largest student-led organisation and represents both law and criminology students. The MSLS is known for its extensive range of events. These include educational, careers, competitive and social events. These events provide opportunities to expand your knowledge in legal and criminal study areas, develop advocacy skills, network with employers and importantly create life-long friendships with fellow students and MSLS members.

The Grounds Cafe is a student-run, popular meeting place for MSLS members. The cafe is essential for our members to caffeinate themselves before tutorials and especially during the exam season. Most importantly, it is where our members love to socialise. Show your MSLS membership to get discounted coffee at The Grounds Cafe!

MEET THE PORTFOLIOS

Careers

The MSLS Careers portfolio offers students various resources and services to help law students in understanding, deciding, and pursuing their desired career. The Careers portfolio hosts an annual Careers Fair and Clerkship Information Series to help students gain more information on professional pathways. These events are also an excellent opportunity to network with firms! Look out for the annual Careers Guide and Clerkship Guide for a comprehensive look into legal pathways.



Education



The MSLS Education portfolio is committed to ensuring you have the best experience at Murdoch Law School. They help offer support to students who may be having difficulties at university. They also run educational panels and social events!

Socials

Our Socials Portfolio runs a variety of events, all aimed at encouraging students to mingle and make friends. Our events are run to build a friendly and supportive community that ensures that all students take time off from their high-stress degrees. These events include an annual First-Year Event, End of Year event, and our Law Ball. Keep your eye out for our annual Law Ball announcement!



Competitions



The Competitions Portfolio hosts competitions for MSLS members and organizes competitions with other law societies and associations, including the Australian Law Students Associations! They host senior competitions which give winning participants the opportunity to compete in national competitions, as well as junior competitions that will teach you how to compete in a safe, supportive environment.

Publications & Marketing

The Publications and Marketing Portfolio are responsible for the day-to-day marketing for the MSLS, as well as organising four annual publications. These publications include Carpe Diem, which is a student journal that allows you to submit and showcase your research. The portfolio is always looking for contributors, so reach out to the team if you are interested in writing!



LAW DEGREE STRUCTURE

To be eligible to graduate, students must complete eleven essential units, sometimes referred to as the 'Priestly Eleven'. Students are also able to customise their degree to their interests, with both law-specified electives and general electives (depending on whether you do a single or double degree). The electives available change each year and are announced towards the end of the year.

The Priestly Eleven are as follows:

- Tort Law
- Criminal Law
- Equity
- Contract Law
- Property Law
- Administrative law
- Evidence
- Trusts
- Ethics
- Corporation law
- Civil Procedure

Many of these units have pre-requisites and are not offered each semester, so please refer to the individual unit outlines on the Murdoch University website and regularly review your degree plan.

FIRST YEAR UNITS

BJU100: Australian Legal System

This unit will teach you the foundations of the Australian legal system and give you essential skills you will use throughout your degree and in your career. You will cover this substantive content whilst learning how to read and interpret statute and cases. You will be guided through legal research databases and learn how to research using library research tools. Finally, you will learn how to complete legal problem solving.

LLB120: Legal Writing for Lawyers

This unit is a skills-based unit that will help you develop clear, concise writing and thorough research skills. The assignments will walk you through the research, planning and writing process required for a legal research paper. This unit will be crucial going forward, so take your time and don't underestimate the importance of meticulous writing.

LLB130: Criminal law and Procedure

As one of the more commonly known legal practice areas, this unit will properly introduce you to all of those interesting criminal law concepts that you heard about from books and movies. It largely focuses on the Criminal Code Compilation Act 1913 (WA), with case law to help you solve. If you step methodically through problem-solving steps, you will love LLB130.

LLB152: Torts Law

If you haven't already heard of the case of the snail in the bottle, you will come to know this case very well. This unit introduces you to 3-4 of the many torts, including negligence and the classic "snail in a bottle" case. A tort is a civil wrong where one party (the tortfeasor) commits a civil wrong against the other (the plaintiff). You will use the Civil Liability Act 2002 (WA) and case law to explore and problem-solve.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

(AND TIPS FOR TACKLING THEM)

Quizzes

Quizzes are low-stakes assessments that are helpful for solidifying knowledge as you go, ensuring you are regularly reviewing content throughout the semester rather than cramming before exams. They are generally held online on the LMS quiz function. They may be timed or untimed and allow you to sit them at any time. Take advantage of these types of assessments. If there is no time limit, take your time as these are generally easy marks.

Research Essays

This type of assessment may be similar to the types of assessments you did in high school. Your marker will want to see you can conduct thorough research, plan a paper, and present strong arguments using clear and concise writing. LLB120 will step you through this process. The library also has several resources to help you complete a research essay.

Legal Problem Solving

Legal problem solving involves being given a scenario with a set of facts (usually some fun and quirky facts!) and having to apply the law to reach conclusions on the law. There are different methods taught (such as IRAC – issue, relevant law, application, conclusion). Whichever you use, your marker wants to see that you can identify and explain relevant law and methodically apply it to the facts to reach a conclusion. As long as you do this and make a strong argument, it does not matter what conclusion you reach.

Exams

Exams may use essay questions, short answer questions, legal problem solving, or a combination. Whilst they are generally open book, do not make the mistake of bringing every resource you have! Try to condense notes to one page per topic. If you know your exam will involve problem solving, try to create 'skeleton notes' that guide you through the problem-solving steps. Practice past exams available through the library and review your tutorial question.

Other

Answer plans: This assessment involves creating an assignment plan. Your marker wants to see you can do strong research, select the appropriate resources, and structure points in a logical and compelling way.

Annotated bibliographies: Your marker will be assessing you on your ability to conduct appropriate research.

Case notes: This involves reading a case, summarising relevant information, identifying the ratio decidendi and pulling out relevant obiter dictum.

What is mooting?

Mooting is a simulated appeal to a superior court, based on a factual scenario. Teams of two to three present their grounds of appeal through both written and oral submissions to a judge.

The written component outlines your submissions and the grounds of appeal. The oral component expands upon your submissions and the judge questions you on the factual and legal basis for your propositions.

Mooting is beneficial for your future career as it provides you with the opportunity to put law theory into practice and the opportunity to gain feedback on your knowledge and presentation your academics. It also teaches you skills you wouldn't learn in the classroom such as trial procedure and decorum.

The MSLS provides opportunities for students to participate in both mooting and practical-style competitions in a friendly and supportive environment. Junior moots are for first and second-year students while senior moots are for those in the third year of their degree and above. A crash course style tutorial is offered for those interested in participating in each competition.

Internships

Internships provide students with the opportunity to gain real-world legal experience at an internship provider, such as a law firm.

During the course of an internship students get hands-on experience through drafting letters, legal research, drafting memorandums, liaising with clients, and other general administrative tasks.

The Murdoch Law School offers you support and opportunities for internships through the 'Internships' unit (LLB301). This unit provides students with the opportunity to gain an internship either by applying for one externally or by applying to one opened by the university.





SCALES

SCALES Community Legal Centre (Southern Communities Advocacy Legal & Education Service) is a non for profit organisation that is partnered with the Murdoch School of Law. Law Students have the opportunity to gain practical experience in a supervised and supportive environment. Students have the opportunity to conduct client interviews, under supervision.

There are various units that allow students to get involved. Please see your degree handbook to see what prerequisites are required.



Clerkships

A clerkship refers to a type of work experience undertaken at a law firm, typically by students in their penultimate year of study. They provide students with the opportunity to work in a new environment and explore a new facet of life as a lawyer.

The application process varies by firm but is typically run biannually in summer and/or winter break. MSLS can help you during this process by providing you with resources, such as the Clerkship Guide, and by providing you with networking opportunities at our events such as at the Careers Fair. At these events, you'll be able to network with representatives from law firms and learn more about these firms and their clerkship program.

Often students who undertake a clerkship at a law firm are preferenced by that firm during the graduate hiring process. Keep an eye out for the annual MSLS Clerkship Guide for more information.

MSLS also runs the Clerkship Series each year with a number of events that provide advice and skills to students that are valuable to all students regardless of what stage of your degree you are in.

Practical Legal Training

Graduates seeking to gain admission to practice must complete Practical Legal Training (PLT). PLT is fundamental to developing the practical skills that you need to enter the profession.

There are a number of PLT providers in Western Australia. Many have flexible start dates and study options. To commence PLT you must have completed all of your Priestley 11 units, most participants choose to wait until they have graduated with their law degree. Upon successful completion, you will gain a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, allowing admission to practice.

MSLS facilitates an annual PLT conference, where students have the opportunity to meet PLT providers. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet PLT representatives and figure out what course best suits your goals.



VOLUNTEERING

WA Justice Association (WAJA)

If you are passionate about social justice, criminal law, and advocacy, consider volunteering with WAJA! WAJA is an association comprised of student volunteers that aims to promote law reform. Founded by Tom Penglis and Julian Sanders following Tom's release from prison in 2020, the association aims to reduce incarceration rates, promote rehabilitation and improve outcomes for those in contact with the justice system as Tom experienced. WAJA aims to achieve these purposes by collaborating with students, social justice organisation and the legal community. Each semester, WAJA intake Project Officers, Advocacy Officers, Communication Officers and Outreach Officers. You can also gain credits through LLB301 (Work Integrated Learning) as a Project Officers.



Teach Learn Grow (TLG)

Are you passionate about education and community service? TLG believes in Australian children having equal educational opportunities and is determined to bridge the education gap in rural and remote areas. Opportunities with TLG include their eMentor Program, where you can volunteer to conduct one-to-one mentoring sessions to disadvantages, rural and remote upper-primary students. You may like to participate in TLG's Rural Program, which provides one-to-one tutoring to primary school students during a one-week visit to that community. These programs aim to promote academic achievement, empowerment and enthusiasm for learning



Teach Learn Grow



UN
youth
australia

UN Youth Australia

Are you interested in education, politics, diplomacy, leadership, international relations and social justice? The UN Youth Australia is a national organisation run by students for students, that aims to educate the youth on international affairs and the UN's role in these affairs to empower young Australian to be leaders on the world stage. Volunteers are aged 16-25 and run a range of programs that aim to educate young people of various topical social and political issues, and give them skills to empower them to solve them. By volunteering as a facilitator, you deliver educational programs to high school 'delegates' through workshops Workshops, Model United Nations (MUNs) and Interactive Problem Solving simulations.



Australian Law Students Association (ALSA)

If you are looking for a larger law students association that support law students across Australia, you may want to consider volunteering in ALSA's team. ALSA is a national representative body for Australian law students, including 40 student organisation and over 40,000 students. It aims to provide a space that allows student law associations to connect with each other, international bodies, and legal professional organisations. ALSA aims to provide education opportunities and resources relevant to legal education and the profession.

MSLS - Get Involved

If you are looking to get involved with your immediate university law society, we are always looking for volunteers! Whether you want to network in the careers portfolio, practice your legal skills in the competitions portfolio, develop marketing and communications skills in the Publications and Marketing Portfolio, or build event planning skills in the Socials portfolio, we have positions for everyone. We are also looking for casual baristas! Reach out if you want to build your skillset and gain experience to put on your resume, that will be valued by future employers.

MSLS - Membership 2023

Joining MSLS is a great way to meet new friends and to build interpersonal skills. MSLS membership provides you with discounts for social events and access to career, educational and moot events, and opportunities. Membership can be purchased on the MSLS website or at Orientation Day. For those wanting to join the MSLS Committee, vacancies are posted on our social media platforms. This is a fantastic way to network and further develop career boosting skills.

Website: <https://www.msln.asn.au>

