

2017 Murdoch Student Law Society

# CLERKSHIP GUIDE



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## Editor's Address



Welcome to the 2017 Murdoch Student Law Society Clerkship Guide!

This is the first year MSLS has produced a clerkship guide and we are very excited to be releasing it. The clerkship application process, is one that is often taxing and stressful. It is generally a competitive and long process that requires sound preparation and research. Thus, the Education and Careers team and I, wanted to ensure we gave Murdoch Law students a resourceful and practical tool about the clerkship process and the clerking experience.

Have you ever been asked what area of law you would like to pursue (numerous times)? Well, seasonal clerkships are a great way to find out! Clerkships are an opportunity for students to gain practical legal experience and explore the work done in different firms, organisations and practice groups. It is also the main way firms find their future employees. Accordingly, clerkships are extremely important to your future employment! I encourage you to educate yourself on the process and opportunities out there.

The guide is broken into three main parts. The first part walks you through the entire application process from research, online application, interviews and offers day. The second part aims to assist students perform well during a clerkship. It includes information on legal research, drafting a memo as well as general tips on making the most of your clerkship. The third aspect of the guide includes articles from students and alumni that have clerked at various firms, both top-tier and boutique, as well as insights of clerking in government bodies. It is never too early to start learning or preparing for clerkships. So make use of the guide and keep an eye out for networking events where you are able to meet firm representatives.

Finally, I would like to thank the Educations and Careers Team; Adriana Costanzo (Education & Careers Vice President) and Chelsea White (Educations Officer) for their assistance in putting the guide together.

I wish you all the best in your clerkship applications. Please feel free to get in touch with me via my details on the MSLS website for any inquiries and feedback on the guide.

Kashmirra Thevar

2017 Careers Officer

# What Is A Clerkship?

Vacation clerkships are offered by a number of law firms and some government departments during either the summer or winter university break periods. In a nutshell, a clerkship is two or three weeks of work experience where you get the opportunity to experience the legal profession and get a sense of working in a firm or government department. As a law degree is very theory based, students don't often have the opportunity to get hands-on practical experience of working in a firm with issues presented by real clients.

Clerking is a great way for you to find out what areas interest you, whether you prefer the fit of a small or large firm, whether commercial law is for you, or even if you'd like to pursue a career as a practising lawyer. Despite rumours you may have heard about certain firms or what area you think you want to work in, it's a good idea to apply for a variety of positions rather than just applying for your preferred firm. There's no way of knowing if something is right for you until you try it, and you may find that you enjoy something unexpected.

Aside from the experience that you will gain, it is becoming more and more valuable to complete a clerkship as law firms see the advantage of offering graduate positions to previous vacation clerks who have demonstrated their work ethic and fit for the firm. That being said, it is by no means a requirement to have completed a clerkship at a firm to receive a graduate offer for that firm, but it can certainly help to give you an edge over other potential candidates.

Clerkships are designed for students in their penultimate year of study, and ultimately these students will usually receive preference for the limited number of positions. However, if you are in the year before your penultimate, do not be discouraged from applying as students in this year can be offered places as well. The clerkship application process can be confusing and time consuming so having a practice run at it can be a great advantage.

On top of that, if you are lucky enough to get a few interviews, having that interview practice will really improve your chances for the following year and with each interview you do, the process will get a little easier. There really is no downside to applying for vacation clerkships. If you get one, fantastic! If you are not offered a position, you haven't wasted your time. Your application writing and interview skills will be better off, and you know you'll need them the following year.

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# Why Do A Clerkship?

Doing a clerkship is an invaluable experience that offers great opportunities. Here are the top 4 reasons why you should do a clerkship!

## 1. Stand out

With the introduction of the priority offer system, vacation clerkships are becoming more important than ever before. In an industry where over 1000 students apply for clerkships, the importance of standing out from the crowd is greater than ever before. One of the best ways to stand out is to have done a few clerkships.

## 2. Practical experience

There can be a vast difference between knowing the theoretical side of the law, and applying it in a real-life situation. Clerkships are a great way to get practical experience in the workplace - you will get to work on real cases under the supervision of senior lawyers. If you want to know what life after law school is like, do a clerkship to get a glimpse! Beyond sacrificing our much-deserved holidays, completing a seasonal clerkship is a unique opportunity to find out what it is like to be a lawyer.

## 3. Training & Networking

Clerkships occur three times a year, in the mid-year break and before and after Christmas and usually run for three to four weeks. Seasonal clerks undertake a wide range of work, some research and some drafting, all of it stimulating. Firms will provide training and an introduction to the different practice areas as well as social events to help the transition from uni to work life. Large firms will often provide extensive training and social events during your clerkship, which will enable you to get to know other students and network. Remember, many jobs are gained because of who you know, not what you know.

## 4. Opportunities for further work

Clerkships are a great way to get your foot in the door - once you show your employer how fabulous you are, they will be more interested in hiring you at the end of your degree (or offering you a casual position for the duration). You will also be able to get a feel for the culture of specific firms, and decide whether it fits with you. Even if you decide that the firm you clerk at is not for you, vacation clerkships look great on your resume to any potential employer. Employers like to see any practical experience as well as your theoretical knowledge. Completing a clerkship also allows the firm to get to know you and how you work. Clerkships are critically important to a firm when deciding who will be offered a graduate position. This may sound like a very competitive environment and it is, and at times it can be stressful, but throughout the clerkship, students are supported by both the firm and the other clerks. It can be demanding, but it is always incredibly enjoyable and rewarding. Experience is likely to translate into better grades - you will know more about an area of law and its practical application than many of your fellow classmates!

# Clerkship Application Dates

## Vacation Clerk & Graduate Recruitment Dates 2017

The Law Schools of Curtin, ECU, Murdoch, Notre Dame and UWA have put together the following recommended recruitment dates for 2017. In doing so, it is intended that these dates meet the needs of the students and provide some structure for the profession.

Summer / Winter Vacation Clerkships 2017/2018

Summer 2017/2018	
Winter 2018	
Applications open	Monday 17 July 2017
Applications close	Sunday 6 August 2017
Review and interview	Monday 7 August to Friday 15 September 2017
Offers	Friday 22 September 2017

Graduate Recruitment 2017 - 1st round offers

Graduate Recruitment 2018	
1st Round Offers	
First rounds offers made	Friday 28 July 2017 (9am)
First round offers held open to	Friday 28 July 2017 (5pm)

Graduate Recruitment 2017 - standard offers

Graduate Recruitment 2018	
Standard Offers	
Applications open	Monday 26 June 2017
Applications close	Friday 11 August 2017
Review and interview	Monday 14 August to Friday 8 September 2017
Offers made	Friday 15 September 2017 (9am)
Offers held open to	Friday 15 September 2017 (5pm)

For information on vacation clerkship placement dates please contact the firms or relevant department directly or refer to their websites. Organisations will decide their own requirements for first round offers and students should consult relevant websites for further information.



# The Clerkship Process



# The Clerkship Process

By Collin Ong<sup>1</sup>

Murdoch 2016 Graduate  
Research Associate – Supreme Court of Western Australia



This guide aims to help you understand what to expect when going through the clerkship application process. It focuses on clerkship applications for commercial law firms but can be applicable for places such as family or criminal law firms.

This guide will outline the various stages involved in the process and what you can do to best prepare for it. I have not included detailed information about things like how to write a cover letter. This guide is intended to be a starting point so further research will definitely be required. The clerkship application process is very competitive and stressful so I hope this guide will help you in some way.

This guide is based on my personal experience, with consultation from others who have also gone through the clerkship application process. We have all been successful in securing clerkships and have had different experiences in doing so. As such, we understand how the clerkship application process works. That said, people are successful by doing different things so please do not take this guide as gospel.

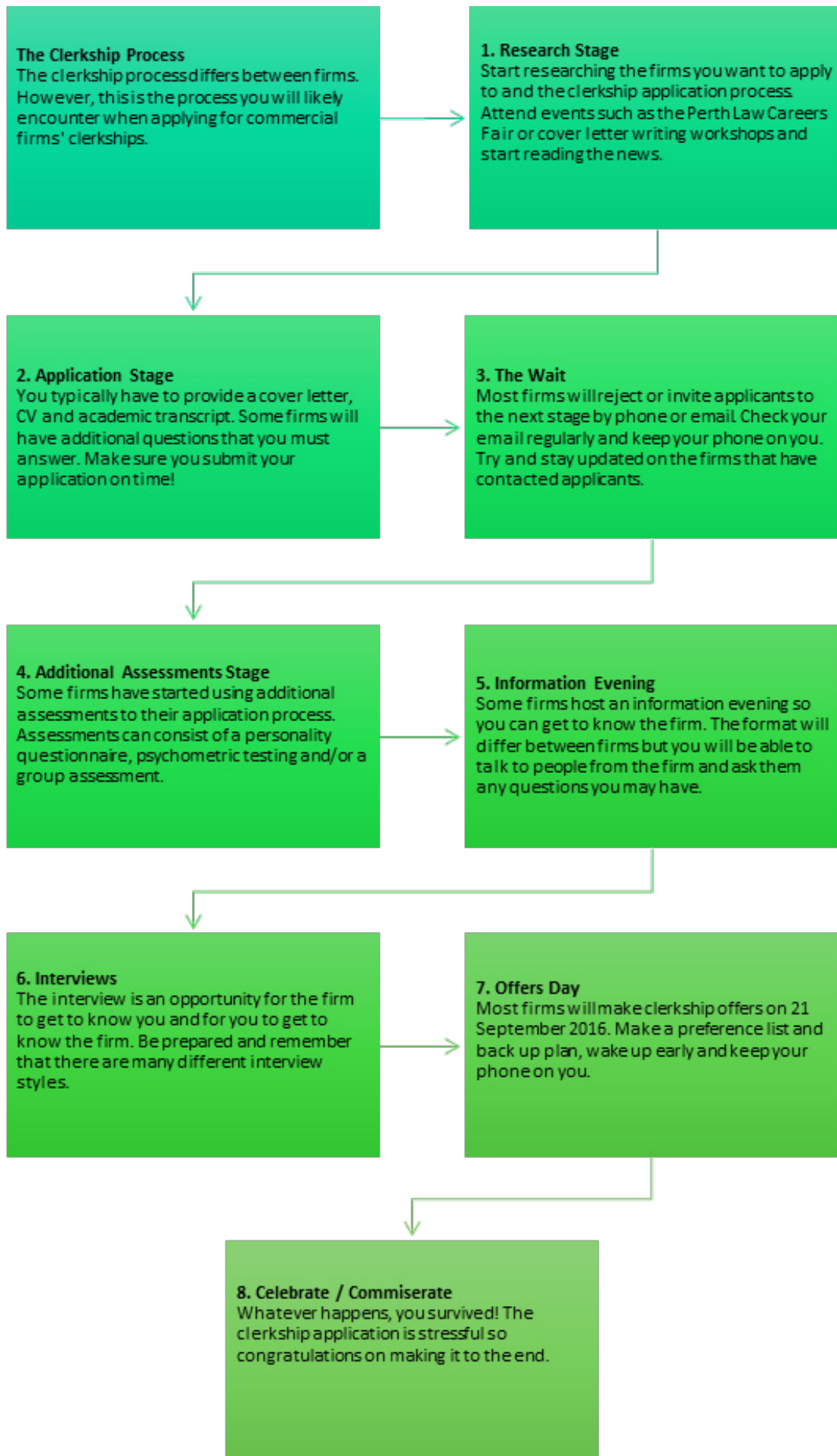
While I have broken the clerkship application process down into consecutive stages, the actual process is a lot more fluid. Not all firms will require you to go through all of the stages and the order of the stages will depend on the firm as well.

Good luck!

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<sup>1</sup> With thanks to Clinton Bonomelli and Lachlan Conroy for their input and Emily Bell for editing this.

# The Clerkship Process



# Research Stage

**When:** You can start this stage at any time.

**Things to do:**

- Read the news and legal updates to develop commercial awareness
- Create a firm list and think of why you want to apply for each firm
- Attend events such as the careers fair and clerkship workshops

## Commercial awareness

This is a major buzz-phrase and many firms are seeking applicants who have commercial awareness. The phrase is easy to toss around but difficult to figure out what it means.

A common view is that you can display commercial awareness by being aware of the world, understanding how businesses operate and how you can help your client achieve their objective with a minimum of fuss. Commercial lawyers have to think like business people – they have to understand their clients' industries and how those businesses work.

Commerciality can be difficult to exhibit as a student. What you can do is read the news to keep up to date with market news and trends, subscribe to legal updates and consider the content being posted. Consider, for example, how the events occurring in countries like China can affect businesses in Australia and around the world and how industries may be affected by falling oil prices. You should also try to think about commercial issues that interest you – you may be asked this during the application process.

Many law firms will publish news updates on their websites. This can be a good way of finding out what is happening in the industry. There are also websites focused on publishing news on the legal industry that you can subscribe to. This includes Lawyers Weekly and Australasian Lawyer. You can also keep up to date on what is happening around the world by reading the news (ABC, SBS, AFR, watoday etc).

## Firm list

Make a list of all the firms you want to apply for. Look through the law society's firm directory – you may not be aware of all the firms that run a clerkship program. You can generally find more information about the firm's vacation clerkship program on its website.

You may decide to be selective and apply to only a handful of firms for various reasons. For example, you may only be interested in a very specific area of law or work full-time. However, I recommend applying to as many firms as you can. Clerkships are a great way to experience the many different firms out there. Applying to a large number of firms can help you maximise your chances of getting a call on offers day. You may also discover an interest in another area that you never considered before.

Divide up your list based on priority to make sure you apply for the firms you want the most. You may also want to note down which firms do not abide by the recommended clerkship application deadline.

At this stage, you should be thinking about what you like about each firm for your cover letters. Your cover letter will ideally be tailored to each firm. You can read about this more in the application section. You can learn more about a firm from their website or flyers, read articles about the firm or talk to people who work or have worked at the firm.

## Events

Leading up to clerkships, the law society will organise workshops geared towards preparing you for the clerkship process. The workshops will teach you things such as cover letter and CV writing skills and interview skills. There will also be a career fair where you can talk to representatives from many different law firms and organisations. Go to these events if you can. Prepare for them by considering what you want to know and any questions you may have. As great as they may be, try not to focus on just collecting freebies.

Some firms may also host events that you can attend. These events can allow you to understand more about specific firms and the things the firm cares about.

### Note

In 2015, Squires Patton Boggs ran a cover letter and CV workshop. After the presentation, firm representatives were willing to look at students' cover letters and CVs. While firms do differ on what they like, the workshop is a great opportunity to obtain feedback on your CV or cover letter.

Make the most of this opportunity by drafting a CV and cover letter for a clerkship in advance. This will ensure that the advice you receive is tailored for the clerkship process and may be more useful than providing a letter for a very different type of job. If you do not have a cover letter for a clerkship however, bring any cover letter that you have. The workshop will still be helpful.

# Application Stage

**When:** You can start preparing your applications at any time. Applications will open on 18 July 2016 for many firms but there is nothing preventing you from preparing early. Make sure that you submit your application on time.

**Things to do:**

- Prepare your main documents (academic transcript, CV and cover letters)
- Fill out the online submission forms

## Main documents

Firms differ in their application process. However, most firms will require you to provide three core documents: your academic transcript, CV and cover letter. They will use these documents to determine who will receive an interview (or clerkship) offer.

If you have to upload and attach these documents, send them as PDFs. This will prevent your documents' appearance from changing when the firms open them. Some firms will ask you to copy and paste the contents of these documents into provided boxes in their application forms instead.

Always check your documents carefully before sending them! Make sure that you check your spelling, provide the correct contact number and email and have addressed your cover letter to the right person and firm.

## Academic transcript

Purchase your academic transcript online or from the Student Centre for \$20.00. Firms want your most recent academic transcript so buy yours after unit results are released. If you need a certified copy of your transcript, bring your transcript to the Student Centre and purchase certified copies for \$1 each. Scan a colour copy as a PDF for your applications.

## CV

Your CV will generally be the same for all your clerkship applications. The structure and content of your CV is entirely up to you. However, it should cover your contact details, employment history, volunteer experience, education details and achievements. Make sure you use a professional email address.

## Cover letter

This is the hardest part of this stage and the most time consuming. You should tailor your cover letter for each firm that you apply to. Firms may seem very similar on their website. This is why it can be helpful to talk to firm representatives at events to gain a better understanding of how firms differ from each other.

Convey why you are interested in a particular firm. It may be the firm's values, size, reputation, resources, practice areas, pro bono projects, the cases they have been involved in etc. There are a lot of different reasons you could write about in your cover letter. Save your research about each firm – it may be useful for interview preparation.

If you do write about a specific practice area, make sure the firm's Perth office has that practice area. The practice areas listed on the firm's website may not differentiate between offices. You can talk to firm representatives to determine what practice groups are in Perth.

You may find it difficult to tailor your cover letter because something that appeals to you about a specific firm may apply to other firms. For example, several firms describe their culture as being collaborative or collegiate. The difference may be in how that environment is created or fostered. These nuances can be difficult to convey and hard to discover from surface information you can find. This is why talking to people from the firm can help.

It can get a little frustrating but try your best to make each cover letter sound like you did not just insert a different firm's name and address in. Use the information on the firms' website and flyers – that is what firms want you to know about them. Find out what people like about their firm and how they would compare it to other firms they have experienced.



## Online Submission Forms

Firms will differ on how they want you to submit your application. You may only need to email your CV, academic transcript and cover letter. Most of the larger commercial firms however, will use an online application system such as cvmail.

If the firm you are applying to uses an online application system, you will need to register an account and create a profile. This can take a lot of time because you have to fill out your personal details, language skills and education profile. Unfortunately, you will also be asked to fill out the grade you received for each completed unit. If you have a double degree, you may need to enter each degree separately as well depending on what the form requires.

Some firms will use another online application system so you may need to create more than one profile. You will find yourself entering what marks you received a lot – this can get a little annoying after a while.

Start early by creating your profile on cvmail in advance. Once applications open, you will also be able to fill in your details for other firms and save your information until you are ready to submit it. While doing this, I created a document with the additional questions I mentioned above.

You may encounter issues with the online application systems (if this happens, try switching browsers). This is why it is important to start this part early – you do not want to fail to submit an application because of technical issues.

## Additional questions

Some firms will have additional questions that you must answer when submitting your application. There may be a word limit for the questions. Try to prepare your answers in advance so that you are not writing a rushed answer minutes before the deadline. You can generally click through the online application forms to view the additional questions before submitting your application.

Firms may phrase their questions slightly differently. Make sure you alter your wording to fit the actual question. The questions may seem repetitive and you may find yourself repeating things that you have already covered

in your cover letter. Think of the additional questions as a chance to add additional information that you might not have included into your cover letter because it did not quite fit. For example, you may want to talk about the people you have talked to from the firm. This may go into your cover letter but it may not fit in some instances. The additional questions can allow you to elaborate more on what you have written in your cover letter as well.

I found it useful to copy and paste all the additional questions into a word document. This was a good way of spell-checking my answers and allowed me to keep track of what questions I still had to complete. I was also able to reuse some of my answers. For example, a common additional question is why you are interested in a career in commercial law.

### Common additional questions

This is not a comprehensive list and firms may change their questions from year to year.

- Why are you interested in a career in commercial law?
- Why do you want to work at \_\_\_\_?
- What is a commercial or legal issue that interests you and why? How do you think that issue will impact \_\_\_\_?
- What academic and extra-curricular activities do you participate in and how will these experiences prepare you for a career in law?
- What skills you have developed from your work or volunteering experience and how would you apply these to a clerkship at \_\_\_\_?
- What areas of law particularly interest you and how have you come to develop that interest?

Submit your application when you are ready! Make sure you check your spelling and read through all your documents. You may also want to get someone else to read over your applications for you – particularly your cover letters.

Once you are done, celebrate! The first part is over and you get a (short) break while firms are reading over all the applications they have received.

## **Note**

The Careers and Employment Team at Murdoch University can help you with your applications. They can provide general advice on improving your prospects, look over your cover letters and CV, and help you with interview tips. They also have useful guides online.

The Murdoch Careers and Employment Centre is located on Bush Court near the Refectory. You can also call (9360 2596) or email ([careers@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:careers@murdoch.edu.au)) them.

# The Wait

**When:** This stage occurs right after the application deadline.

**Things to do:**

- Be contactable - keep your mobile on you and check your email regularly
- Keep up to date on what firms have sent out rejections or offers
- Prepare for the interview

## Be contactable

Once you have submitted your applications, sit back and wait for firms to contact you. This may occur via phone or email (or in rare occasions, post). Rejections will generally be sent by email. Some firms will send rejections and invitations at similar times while others will not. Some firms (a minority thankfully) will not send rejection emails to applicants.

Firms will generally contact applicants on weekdays during business hours. However, calls and emails after business hours have occurred previously. You will want to remain contactable at this stage. Keep your mobile on you and make sure that you have voicemail set up (with an appropriate voicemail message). Check your emails very regularly.

You may have to book a timeslot for the next stage and RSVP for the firm's information evening. This can occur via phone or online depending on the firm's preference.

Book your interview (or whatever the next stage may be) early to ensure that you get the timeslot that you want and have an updated calendar to ensure that you do not double book yourself. If you book multiple interviews in one day, make sure that you leave yourself enough time to get to the next interview on time. Interviews can run overtime and some firms will arrange for you to get coffee after the interview with a graduate.

## Keep up to date

As offers and rejections are not always sent out at the same time, it is important to keep yourself updated on the firms that have sent out offers. There are different ways of doing this. The Whirlpool forums will generally have a thread for WA Clerkships under Graduate Programs (<http://forums.whirlpool.net.au/forum/136>). This thread can be very useful for tracking the firms that have sent out offers or rejections. You can also discuss the process with others and read the WA clerkship threads from previous years.

Another way of knowing what firms have sent out rejections or offers is to ask your friends. If you have a group of good friends who are also applying, you may all want to update each other on the firms that you have heard back from. Keep in mind however that not everyone will be comfortable sharing information on the firms they have heard back from.

## Prepare for the interview

You may not have a lot of time between a call or email and the actual interview. As such, you may want to start preparing for the interview while you are waiting to hear back from firms. The tips for how to prepare for this can be found in the Interview Stage.

## Additional Assessments Stage

**When:** This stage takes place after you are successful in progressing to the next stage of a firm's clerkship application process.

**Things to do:**

- Fill out the personality questionnaire
- Practice and complete the psychometric testing assessments
- Prepare for the group assessment

A number of firms started using additional assessments as part of their clerkship application process recently. The assessments may consist of a personality questionnaire, psychometric testing and/or a group assessment.

### Personality questionnaire

Some firms will ask you to complete a personality questionnaire. Some firms will use the personality questionnaire results to determine the people they will interview while other firms will guarantee you an interview regardless of your questionnaire results.

The personality questionnaires are quite similar and are designed to examine your work personality context. The questions will generally examine things such as:

- **Drive and initiative** – do you prefer a variety of tasks or to do one thing at a time?
- **Organizing and executing style** – do you prefer to start things or finish things? Do you prefer to follow rules and the conventional approach?
- **Problem solving style** – do you prefer thoughts and feelings or statistics and figures?
- **Resilience** – are you concerned with the future? Do you tend to conceal your feelings or say what you think straightaway?
- **Relationships** – do you prefer to take charge? Do you feel more comfortable in casual or formal environments? Do you prefer to work in a team or on your own?

You are generally encouraged to be honest when completing the personality questionnaire. Most questionnaires will have similarly phrased questions to test for consistency. This can help detect dishonesty so try to be relatively consistent with your answers. You may also be asked questions based on your questionnaire results in the interview (eg can you tell us about your working style).

### Psychometric testing

Some firms have also introduced psychometric testing similar to those used in the application process by the Big Four (ie Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC) and some government departments' graduate programs. A third party provider (eg CEB Global, TalentQ and Chandler Macleod) will conduct the psychometric testing online.

The psychometric testing will generally consists of a verbal, numerical and logical/inductive assessment. Some firms do not require applicants to complete the numerical assessment. You may have to complete the assessments in a set order. The assessments tests the same concepts but differ in style depending on the provider.

The verbal test examines your ability to summarise information, draw inferences and arrive at logical conclusions. The numerical assessment tests your ability to interpret and use numerical data and draw information from graphs and tables. The logical/inductive test examines your ability to draw inferences, link information from different concepts, deal with new contexts and solve problems and ambiguities.

The assessments will be timed – there may be an overall time for the whole assessment or a set amount of time for each question. Manage your time well – you do not want to spend so much time on one question that you run out of time for the last 5 questions. Take note of the deadline for completing the assessments as well and ensure that you have reliable internet, pen and paper, and a calculator before you begin.

Each third party provider will have practice assessments. Complete these to help you get used to the style of the questions and the time pressure. You may be able to figure out the underlying principles for some questions by practicing.

After you have completed the tests, you will generally not know your score for the assessments. Some firms will provide you with feedback about your performance however. This may occur after you have completed a clerkship.

## **Group assessment**

You may be asked to attend a group assessment, which will generally take place at the firm's office. There are different styles of group assessments. Generally, you will be divided into small groups and given a document and task. The group will be required to discuss the task and present their conclusions. There will normally be a time limit for doing the activity so keep an eye on the time.

You will be assessed during the group assessment so keep in mind what the firm is looking for. Make sure you contribute but do not dominate the discussion. You want to show that you can work collaboratively and someone who insists on talking for most of the allocated time period will not come across as a team player.

### **Note**

Some firms will have an assessment day comprising of individual and group assessments. These may be legal or non-legal in nature. Individual assessments differ but you are generally given a task and asked to write down your response. You may need to generate ideas, write a report or advice based on the facts you are provided. There may be a group discussion beforehand.

These things can vary greatly so you need to be flexible on the day. Pay attention to the instructions, clarify tasks if required and stay calm. Assessment days are really not as scary as they sound.

# Information Evening

**When:** If you are successful in securing a clerkship interview, you will be invited to an information evening if the firm hosts one.

**Things to do:**

- Prepare questions that you can ask

Information evenings can be a good way of finding out more about a firm and their culture. Remember to RSVP to the event. The dress code is usually business casual or business attire.

Firms differ in how they run information evenings. However, firms will generally talk to you about the firm, its practice areas etc and give you a chance to meet and talk to various people from the firm. Some firms will give in-depth presentations about the work they do and the deals they have been involved in while other firms may only give a quick speech.

In the mingling portion of the evening, staff of various levels from partners to graduates will generally be spread around a room. It is up to you to go and talk to people and ask them any questions you may have. This can be difficult given that there are a lot more applicants than staff and the room can get very noisy at times. It may feel overwhelming but try your best to talk to a few different people and get an understanding of how the firm operates.

Some firms however will do things differently and host a panel discussion where applicants can ask employees questions. Alternatively, applicants may be divided into small groups and partners from different practice groups will rotate and talk to you.

Regardless of the style of the information evening, the main purpose it is to let the firm get to know you and for you to learn more about the firm and its people. Try and prepare some questions beforehand that you can ask. Asking someone about the practice area they are in, why they chose it and how they got to where they are can be a good way of getting the conversation started. If you are interested in a specific practice area, mention this and the person you are talking to may be able to introduce you to someone in that practice.

I found it useful to note down what I learnt and the people I met afterwards. This helped me formulate questions for the interview based on my discussions at the information evening.

While some firms may expressly state that the information evening does not form part of their assessment, people will still be watching you. Some of the people attending may be interviewers. Behave appropriately and have a good time.

## Note

Not all firms will have an information evening. Some firms have an additional stage, such as a cocktail event or a breakfast, which may take place after the interview. Some firms will run an assessment day instead, which incorporates elements of an information evening.



# Interview Stage

**When:** Interviews can take place at any point before offers day. Some firms will interview early while other firms will interview late.

**Things to do:**

- Practice for your interview
- Be prepared for an office tour or coffee with a graduate

## Practice for your interview

Interviewing is a skill that you can improve. This guide will provide some information on what you can expect as well as tips for preparing for your interview. It is not however, comprehensive and does not tell you what you should be saying in interviews. This is something that you will need to research and practice. Avoid sounding rehearsed though.

Securing an interview means that you have the academic requirements the firm is after. The purpose of the interview is to find out more about you. Some firms will want to learn more about you in terms of how you work in a team or how you deal with particular situations. For other firms, the interview will focus on determining whether you are an interesting and nice person that people will want to work with.

Firms differ in their interviewing style based on what they are looking for – some firms will ask behavioural questions, some will ask hypothetical questions, others will just want to find out more about you and some firms will do a mix of the three. Talk to people to find out what a particular firm's interviewing style is and practice the different interviewing styles.

Two people typically conduct the interview but there may be more or less interviewers. The interviewers may consist of partners, lawyers and/or HR. Most firms will have an interviewing partner and HR present at the interview. Some firms will have more than one interview stage as well.

One of the interviewers may dominate and ask most of the questions during the interview. However, everyone in the room is observing you so pay attention to them all. Look at everyone when answering a question, regardless of who asked it and pay attention to your body language. You want to appear relaxed and confident, even if you are not.

## Behavioural interview questions

These questions seek to understand how you have previously dealt with particular situations. They often start with "Tell me about a time when". Structure your answer clearly and use an example that highlights the capabilities the interviewers are seeking.

Structure your answer using the STAR approach:

- **Situation** – provide context and explain the situation to set the scene;
- **Task** – outline the task required of you;
- **Action** – explain the action you took; and
- **Result** – discuss the outcome of your action.

Using this approach will help you give well-constructed, organized and relevant answers. Answering behavioural questions is like telling someone a story. Provide them with enough details so they can understand your story without boring them.

Firms may seek the following capabilities when interviewing applicants:

- **Motivation and career interests** – demonstrate an interest in commercial law and how working at the firm will align with your career goals;
- **Drive and initiative** – demonstrate that you have been proactive and seek opportunities for development;
- **Organizing and executing** – demonstrate that you can manage time effectively and follow instructions;
- **Commerciality** – demonstrate that you understand the legal industry and the commercial context surrounding it;
- **Leadership / teamwork** – demonstrate that you can work effectively in a team and take charge when needed; and
- **Building relationships** – demonstrate that you can build strong work relationships and have social awareness.

You want to provide a range of answers about different situations that demonstrates the relevant capabilities. Think of a list of examples you can use for each potential interview question. These can be from work, university, sports or other activities you are involved in.

For each question, write down an example that would best answer the question. Then write down two additional examples that would be sufficient to answer the question as backups. Having backup examples will ensure that you can talk about a range of situations you have been in. You do not want to answer every behavioural question with the same example.

If you are unable to think of an example during your interview, it is fine to ask for more time. Drink some water before you answer if you need some time to consider and structure your response. If you need even more time, you can also say something like “That is a great question. Let me think about that”. It is better to ask for more time to consider a question than to provide a messy answer that does not address what the interviewers are after.

## Hypothetical interview questions

You may be asked hypothetical questions requiring you to discuss what you would do in a particular situation (eg what would you do if a client demands advice from you on the phone?). Hypothetical questions differ greatly and require different things. The questions may examine your problem solving skills and your understanding of clients and what it is like to work in a firm. Outline the actions you would take and your reasoning for doing so.

## Questions about you

Questions about you often involve the interviewers going through your CV and asking you questions based on what you have written, questions about why you chose your degree(s), your interests and hobbies etc. Be prepared to talk about anything you have in your application. Interviewers are looking to chat and learn more about you. The idea is generally to gauge whether you fit the firm’s culture.

## Common interview questions

This is not a comprehensive list of questions and you should search online or talk to other people to generate further interview questions that you can prepare for.

- Why this firm / what differentiates this firm from other firms?
- What do you think is the benefit of remaining an independent firm?
- Tell us about yourself.
- Why law / commercial law?
- What are your strengths / weaknesses?
- Tell us about a time when you were innovative / made a mistake / had to deal with conflict / made a decision that people disagreed with / had to deal with a difficult team situation / had to overcome hardship?
- What is a criticism or feedback that you have received and how did you adapt to it?
- What is your favourite / least favourite unit?
- What would your friends / co-workers etc say about you?
- Where do you see yourself in X years?
- Tell us about a commercial or legal issue that you are interested in and why.
- What do you like to do outside of studying?

## Questions at the end

At the end of the interview you will have the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. Do your best to ask a question – not asking a question can make you appear disinterested. You may want to prepare questions beforehand. Try not to ask questions that you can find out from the firm's website (eg how many offices they have, when they will be making offers etc). This will indicate that you have not done your research about the firm.

If you are out of ideas on what to ask, ask the interviewers about themselves – what they like about the firm, how they got to where they are, their role etc. Interviewers will generally tell you a bit about themselves at the start of the interview and this can prompt more questions – for example, if they have recently joined the firm, you can ask them why they joined the firm or what they like about the firm compared to their old firm.

Do not ignore HR during this time. HR can provide a different and interesting perspective on the firm and may be better positioned to answer some of your questions.

## Office tours and coffee with a graduate

Some firms will arrange for you to have an office tour and/or coffee with a graduate. This can take place before or after your interview. Be prepared to meet and talk briefly to people in the office if you have an office tour. You can use this time to ask any additional questions that you may have or questions specific to graduates or junior lawyers (eg what was it like adjusting to full-time work after university?).

Remember that you are still being observed during this time. You may also be asked what other firms you are interviewing at by the graduate or at the interview so you may want to prepare an answer beforehand.

# Offers Day

**When:** Offers day is on 21 September 2016. However, some firms may make offers earlier or later.

**Things to do:**

- Make a preference list
- Create a back up plan
- Wait and hope you get a call

## Preference list

In preparation for offers day, you may want to create a preference list. Most firms' clerkships occur at the same time. A lot of firms have two summer clerkships and one winter clerkship but some firms only offer summer clerkships while other firms are more flexible with their dates. The length of the clerkship can differ as well.

When preparing for offers day, you should note the different clerkship dates and determine which firms you can fit and where. Keep in mind that you may have applied to places that do not do interviews and may receive an offer from them as well (eg SSO, DPP, Solomon Brothers etc). Some firms may offer you a specific intake however, so be prepared to alter your plans.

Make a preference list ranking the firms from your most wanted to least. Some people preference firms based on their impression of the firm while others will also take into account the likelihood of obtaining a graduate position from the firm. Decide what is best for you before the day. You will have 2 hours to accept or reject an offer on offers day.

## Create a back up plan

No one wants to think about the possibility of failure but you should anyway. The clerkship process is competitive and many people will not receive a clerkship offer. It will be disappointing but it is honestly not the end of the world. Not getting a clerkship does not mean that you will not be able to become a commercial lawyer. You may just need to adjust your plans.

Create a back up plan in advance. Think about what you will do to get a job if you do not receive an offer. You may want to consider further studies, volunteering or paralegal opportunities, associateships, alternative careers (eg law graduate at a government department, management consulting or a position at the Big Four) or positions at smaller firms.

Remember that there are a lot of firms that do not run a clerkship program and some places will accept graduates who did not clerk there. Further, some firms will make market offers (ie open applications for graduates who did not clerk with them) due to business needs. Do not give up just because you did not receive a clerkship offer. Work instead on improving yourself and your CV in preparation for graduate applications.

While it is difficult to get a graduate position, things do get easier once you have 2-3 years experience. If you browse job sites, you will see that there are a lot of vacancies for lawyers at that stage. It is possible to move and work at your dream firm later on if that is what you want.

## Waiting for a call

Good luck for offers day! Firms will generally start calling at 9am but some firms will ring earlier so wake up early just in case. Ensure that your phone is charged and you have your preference list, pen and paper handy. You may need to write down the dates of particular clerkships or the number you have to call back to accept or reject an offer.

There is not much to do until people (hopefully) start calling. Some firms will send out emails on the day as well so keep an eye on your inbox. If you receive an offer, feel free to take the 2 hours to think about it. The clerkship periods available may be limited if you wait too long however.

Be proactive about your offers – if a firm that is third on your preference list offers you a clerkship, call your first and second preferences and ask them if they intend to give you an offer. This can save you from waiting needlessly to hear back from a firm and can help you decide whether to take a particular offer or not.

If a firm that you like is only able to offer you a particular clerkship period (eg summer one) and you have already accepted another offer for that particular period, ring up the firm you have already accepted. They may be able to move you to a different clerkship period. It does not hurt to ask and can prevent you from rejecting an offer unnecessarily. The same applies if you accidentally double-booked yourself.

You can try and negotiate with firms as well. Some firms are flexible and will allow people to start their clerkship earlier or later than the usual period or miss a few days of their clerkship.

Be courteous when ringing a firm to reject their offer – there is no need to burn unnecessary bridges. Firms understand that you can only fit a certain number of clerkships in and may ask you why you have chosen another firm over them.

Note that some firms will call to reject you as well. This generally will not take place at 9am though. If you receive such a call, ask them for feedback. Most firms will provide you with feedback if you have interviewed with them – you just need to ask for it. You can email the firm for feedback as well. The feedback you receive can be very useful and can help you improve for future opportunities. This is not the end of the road so take any feedback you may receive on board.

## Celebrate / Commiserate

**When:** As soon as you can after offers day!

**Things to do:**

- Celebrate/commiserate with your friends or family

Celebrate or commiserate after offers day is over! The clerkship process is a very stressful period and you survived it. If you secure a clerkship, congratulations and good luck when clerking!

If you did not secure a clerkship, work on implementing your back up plan and do not give up. The clerkship process is not the only way to secure a graduate position in a law firm. Make plans with your family or friends – you may not want to be around people at this time (and it's understandable!) but try not wallow on your own for too long.

You may be curious about how others fared during offers day but try not to ask. Some people might be happy to share what offers they received but it can be very annoying – particularly if someone did not receive an offer. People will generally tell you if they want you to know. Respect other people's preferences and if you receive those messages, it is entirely up to you whether you want other people to know or not.




The background of the entire advertisement is a photograph of two men, Gareth Jolly and Cameron Loughlin, standing in front of a modern building with large windows. They are both wearing dark suits, white shirts, and ties. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a patterned tie, while the man on the right is also wearing glasses and has a goatee. They are both smiling at the camera. The text is overlaid on this image.

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Partner Gareth Jolly and Associate Cameron Loughlin,  
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# Preparing For A Clerkship



# Top Tips for Clerkship Success

## Maintain good grades

While grades aren't the be-all and end all, they are usually the metric that law firms use to determine if they would like to consider your resume and eventually offer you an interview. Most firms generally require applicants to maintain a GPA of anywhere between 60% to 85%. This means you need to keep on top of lectures, assignments and readings. Do some trial and error and find out what your best study technique is. Form a study group with peers that are academically oriented. Speak to your lecturers, attend tutorials and start making notes during the early part of semester. Law is a content-heavy degree with lots of material to get through. Do yourself a favour and get organised...early!

In saying that, all hope is not lost if you've happened to scrap a pass or fail a unit. Most firms can be understanding if you have a valid reason for a fail grade. The important thing is to ensure it doesn't happen too many times. Evaluate what went wrong and aim to improve.

On the other hand, if you've managed to maintained at least a distinction average, congratulations! But don't get complacent. Remember law firms like to see that you're both smart and well-rounded.

## Get legal experience

Definitely a must do. As long as a law degree may seem, no lecture or textbook will ever give you the experience of dealing with a real client with real legal issues. Thus, many students may feel unprepared to deal with 'real world issues' upon graduation. This is where getting legal experience (paid or unpaid) comes in.

Legal experience is not only a great way to gain insight to 'lawyering', it also allows you to impact someone's life, network and boost your resume. You'll learn simple things from court procedure to actual substantive law.

You'll also realise that lawyering has very little to do with writing essays for assignments and sitting two-hour exams. Rather, you'll have to conduct specific research with strict deadlines, you'll understand that a legal issue is rarely presented as straightforward problem questions, and see that lawyers aren't simply technical experts. They are skilled at dealing with emotions, negotiating and explaining legal jargon to everyday laypersons. On ideas on how to get legal experience, see our volunteering section in our careers guide.

## Get involved in competitions

Competitions are another great way to get some practical experience. At Murdoch, a variety of competitions are offered for students to learn different skills in a competitive, yet relaxed environment. While the prospect of public speaking (as required in competitions such as moot and trial advocacy) may be daunting, there is no better place and time to refine your skills, than at university. Competitions are offered on different nights, in both semesters for first years and older law students. So there is always something for everyone.

For first years, you are eligible to compete in all the junior competitions. My advice: take part in everything. You'll be competing with other first-year students who have not done competitions before and you'll be judged by older students who have either won competitions or alumni who are now legal practitioners. Essentially, it is a level-playing field and a great opportunity to gain excellent feedback to implement when you compete in senior competitions.

For second years and above, it is always a good idea to try your hand in at least a few competitions-especially those that require advocacy. It may be scary as you'll be competing with students who have done the competition before but remember you are competing to learn and better yourself. There is always something to be gained when you lose or win. It is also a great way to meet friends and network!

For more information on competitions we offer, please visit the MSLS website ([msls.asn.au](http://msls.asn.au)).

## **Participate in Extra-curricular Activities**

I know...with maintaining good grades, trying to get legal experience, being in competitions as well have having your own social life...it can be hard to fit anything else in to your schedule. But extra-curricular activities, such as sport, performing arts, clubs, social causes, learning a language, doing extra courses are always a great way to show prospective employers that you aren't just a law student.

Do something that interests you. You'll be more inclined to stay on top of your commitments and it'll also give you an enjoyable break from university and work. It is also a great way to meet other like-minded people that come from different walks of life. Remember your network is not only the people you meet 'professionally', but also your peers outside of your university/profession.

## **Practice makes perfect**

For interviews, legal research memos, writing cover letters and networking.....your first time is probably going to be pretty bad. That goes for everyone. Don't be too hard on yourself if you didn't do as well as you could've. Always ask for feedback if you can and seek the advice of older law students that have gone through the same process

And then Practice. Practice answering interview questions, asking the careers centre to look through your cover letters, research and drafting documents using clear language. If you think you need some extra help, attend our clerkship seminar series as well as the library research sessions.

## **Legal Research**

Legal research is probably the most important tool you will need as a clerk. You will mostly be conducting research for the duration of your clerkship on areas of law you have not come across before. Your role is to ensure that you are able to navigate your way through the different databases and be familiar with where to find certain cases, legislation, government publications, second reading speeches etc.

If you need some assistance, the law library hosts a variety of research workshops throughout the year. Visit The Murdoch Law Library website for the dates for the Semester 2 Law Library Training Program.



# Be Smart

**Be commercial.** Whether they are household brand names that have changed the way we work, live, shop or play, or start-ups just about to shake things up all over again, our clients are clever, creative and commercial. So are we. You will learn how to adapt what you've learned about the law to real-time scenarios.

**Be connected.** From day one, you will be part of our global office – working alongside lawyers across the country and all around the world.

**Be committed.** Our culture emphasises and rewards collaboration, accountability and responsibility. We support our clients, our teams and our community.

**Be empowered.** From the very start we give you the tools, know-how and options you need to set your own challenges and define your career path.

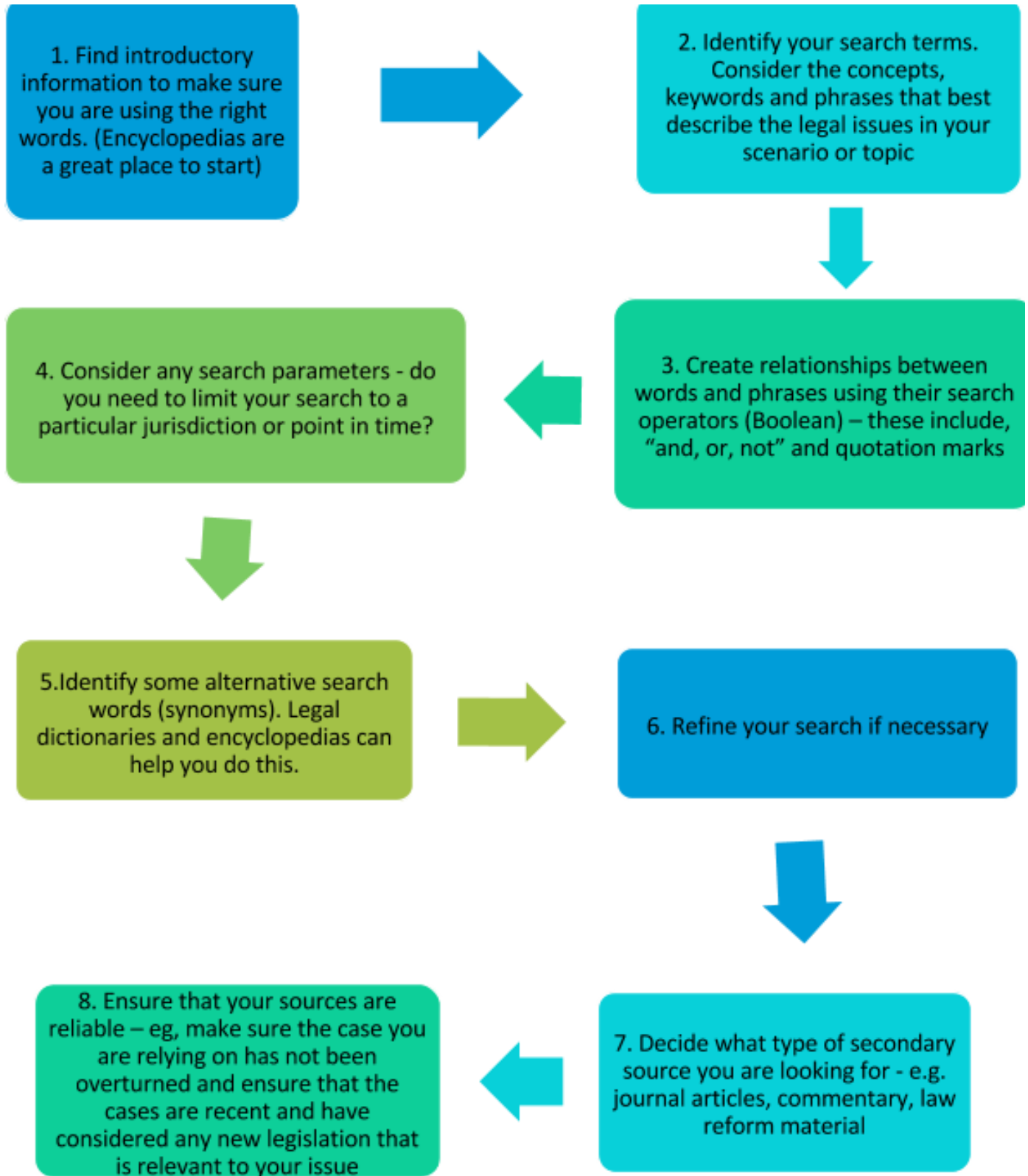
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**Be one of us.**



# How to Research

Before you start your legal research, it is useful to plan a search strategy.



## Search Operators

Being able to search key terms and refine your search is vital in legal research. Search operators are a great way to refine your search and ensure that you are looking for all relevant results.

Listed below are search operator charts from main Australian Databases:

### Westlaw AU

Connector	Type	Retrieves Docs that contain	Example
AND	&	Both search terms (Narrows search)	Protection visas & persecution
OR	A space	Search term or both terms (Broadens search). Useful for synonyms or alternative spellings.	Car Automobile
Grammatical Connectors	/p	Search terms in the same paragraph	Negligence /p Duty
	/s	Search terms in the same sentence	Design /s defect
	+s	The first term preceding the second in the same sentence	Attorney +s fee
Numerical Connectors	/n	Search terms within n terms of each other	Personal /3 jurisdiction
	+n	The first term preceding the second by n terms	Robert +2 Stevenson
Phrase	"" ""	Search terms appear in that order	"Mental Harm"



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Connector	Type	Retrieves Docs that contain	Example
AND	&	Both search terms (Narrows search)	Protection visas & persecution
AND NOT	AND NOT	Finds documents with first word, but not phrase	British AND NOT British Colombia
OR	A space	Search term or both terms (Broadens search). Useful for synonyms or alternative spellings.	Car Automobile
Grammatical Connectors	/p	Search terms in the same paragraph	Negligence /p Duty
	NOT /p	Both terms but not in the same paragraph	Cable Not /p television
	/s	Search terms in the same sentence	Design /s defect
	NOT /s	Both terms but not in the same sentence	Market NOT /s share
	+s	The first term preceding the second in the same sentence	Attorney + fee
Numerical Connectors	/n	Search terms within n terms of each other	Personal /3 jurisdiction
	+n	The first term preceding the second by n terms	Robert +2 Stevenson
	NOT /n	The first word appears but the second word does	Trust Not /2 Charitable
Phrase	""	Search terms appear in that order	"Mental Harm"



Connector	Sign	Example	Retrieves docs that contain:
Wildcards	*	Tax*	A word beginning with tax – this would include: taxi, taxation, taxable
	?	Licen?e	The word “licence” or “license”
Phrase	“ ”	“Moral Rights”	The phrase
And	&	Copyright & Invention	Both the first term and the second term
OR	Or	Treaties OR Conventions	Returns all documents that contain either the first term or the second term or both
NOT	NOT	Love NOT war	The first word but do not contain the second
NEAR	NEAR	Mabo NEAR Queensland	Return all documents where the first term appears nearby the second term. “Near” corresponds to 50 words.
W/n	W/n	Mabo w/5 Queensland	The first term appears within n words of the second term
Proximity operator	/n/	Smith/5/brown	Words and phrases within n words of each other



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# What Will I Do During A Clerkship?

On the first day you can expect an office tour, some introductions, to be shown how to use the computer systems and be introduced to the practice group you have been placed in. You can expect presentations from the different practice groups to introduce you to what the firm does. These might be on the first day or spread out over your clerkship. These presentations are a great insight into the areas you think you might be interested in. You might find an area you thought was dull is actually really interesting when you see firsthand what is involved.

A lot of larger firms have a buddy system in place. Your buddy will be a graduate lawyer or restricted practitioner in your practice group who you are partnered with for the duration of your time at the firm. They are there to be asked the questions you think are embarrassing or to clarify how things work. When you start to freak out because you don't understand a memo or task you have been given, go to your buddy they will be happy to help you. Remember that they were in your shoes not too long ago and therefore they know exactly how you feel.

## Training Sessions

The firm does not expect you to walk in knowing everything. You will participate in a number of training exercises and seminars in your time at the firm. Each firm is different but they may cover things like research skills, plain English, letter writing and memorandum drafting. You will learn useful tips here that you won't learn at university so keep any handouts you are given and take notes, they will be useful when you start your graduate position.

During your clerkship you can expect to be given real work for real clients. This is an aspect of your clerkship that should be thoroughly enjoyable. You can expect to be given tasks that might include sitting in on client meetings and taking notes for your supervisor, drafting correspondence for a file, researching case law or legislation on a complex issue and writing a memorandum for your supervisor detailing the findings of your research.

## Practice Groups

You will be placed in at least one practice group during your clerkship. Depending on how long your clerkship is you may have the opportunity to be placed in more than one practice group. Some firms will ask you either in your interview or after being offered a position to indicate preferences for which practice group you might like to be placed in during your time at the firm. Therefore it is a good idea to have a think about this beforehand to avoid saying the first thing that comes to mind and missing out on experiencing the areas you are interested in.

## Social Activities

You would be pretty unlucky to make it the whole way through your clerkship without getting to attend one of the many social activities put on by the firm. If your clerkship is in December you will attend the Christmas party. However, there's no need to feel let down if your clerkship is in June as you've got the end of financial year functions. An important tip to be aware of is to be careful you don't accidentally drink too much at a social function, it can be hard to keep track when alcohol is provided for you and you do not want to make a fool of yourself in front of a prospective employer. As well as those big events, there will be casual sport, after work drinks and many other functions you might be invited to. Make the most of these, they are a great way to meet people in the firm outside your practice group and get a feel for whether you think you could see yourself fitting in at the firm. Remember it isn't just you trying to demonstrate you would be a good employee; the firm are equally trying to sell themselves to you as a potential future employer. Overall, your clerkship should be both a great learning experience and a lot of fun as well. Hopefully after leaving the firm you have a better idea of what areas of practice you like, and whether you would apply for a graduate job at the firm.

# Tips While Doing A Clerkship

1. Get to know the staff by involving yourself in social activities, asking questions and simply saying 'good morning' every day.
2. Be proactive in seeking out work. If work is not forthcoming, tell people you have capacity and are willing to help.
3. Provide status updates on tasks to your supervising lawyers.
4. Take care to avoid silly mistakes and always proofread your work.
5. Be succinct and clear with your writing. Stick to plain English and be mindful who and what the work is for e.g. an internal memo that junior lawyers will use, a letter to a client or a presentation for your entire team.
6. Use every opportunity to get to know the firm. Interact and network with staff outside of your allocation team.
7. Don't leave your desk without a pen and a paper. People are aware when there are clerks in the office and are likely to pull you into their office when they see you and give you instructions for a task.
8. Get to know the secretaries. The secretaries are a vital part of the firm and you should always treat them with the utmost respect.
9. Actively listen during client meetings and absorb as much information as possible.
10. Never let fear hold you back and embrace the challenges with open arms. Nobody expects you to know all the answers, but they do expect you to give it your best shot.

# Drafting Legal Memoranda (Memos)

You will most likely be doing legal memos when clerking. This is essentially an outline of your research pertaining to a particular legal issue. Each firm and lawyer will have a preference of their style of memo. It is always best to ask your buddy or supervising lawyer for a template.

## SAMPLE MEMO

**Matter/ Client File:**

**Date:**

1. Questions

(a) First question:

(b) Second question:

(c) Third question:

*Use this section to outline your instructions. Succinctly set out the questions you have been asked to consider.*

2. Context

(a) We act for Party A

(b) Give a summary of the relevant facts to the questions. This includes particulars of the client's case, details of their litigation history etc

3. Executive Summary

*This is used to summarise your research*

(a) Ensure this covers all issues raised in the body of your memo

(b) This is basically the conclusion of your research

4. Analysis

(a) First question

1. Use appropriate headings and subheadings

2. Ensure that you are citing according to preference style

3. Your reasoning should be logical

(b) Second question

(c) Third question

5. Recommendations/ Further Information

(a) Include information on what further information is required, why it is necessary, and the way best to obtain that information

(b) If possible, get the information before writing the memo

# Opportunities For Non-Penultimate Students

## Allens Dive In Program

This program is catered towards 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> year LLB students or 1<sup>st</sup> year JD students who are curious about commercial law. The program runs for a day and provides students with the opportunity to meet the firm's partners, learn about the work they do and hear tips about the clerkship program.

To apply visit the Allens website: <https://www.allens.com.au/careers/graduates/divein/index.htm>

## DLA Piper Clerkship

DLA piper is a global law firm that practices in a range of areas of commercial law. Their Perth office offers a winter clerkship for non-penultimate students. Applications for their intake open 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and close 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

For more information, visit their website: <https://www.dlapipergraduates.com/au/opportunities/>

## Summer Court Clerkship

This program is open to all law Students who are in their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year however priority is given to those students who have NOT previously held a clerkship. The program consist of the student clerking at two different courts and allows students to experience the duties of a judge's associate.

## Clerkships - Boutique Firms

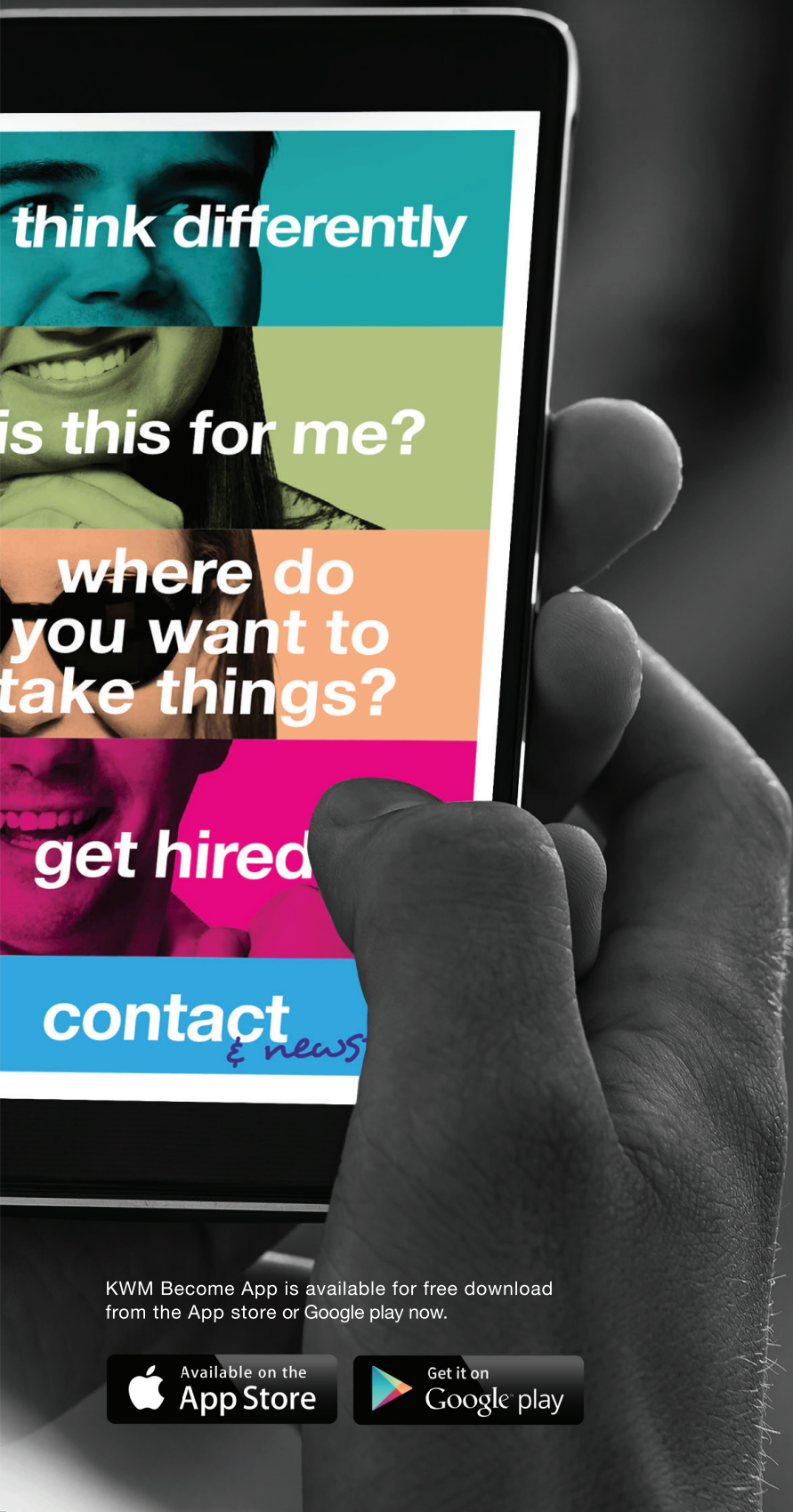
Generally, some boutique firms offer clerkships to students anytime throughout the year- dependent on their capacity. To keep up to date vacancies, join the MSLS Educations and Careers Facebook Group.



# B E C O M E

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King & Wood Mallesons refers to the network of firms which are members of the King & Wood Mallesons network. Visit [kwm.com](http://kwm.com) for more information.

# A Quick Guide to The Clerkship Programs of our Premium Sponsors



**Clerkship dates:** One program will run during the November – February 2017/18 summer break for a 3 week duration. Please refer to our websites for dates.

**Recruitment process:**

Applications are submitted through [www.allenoververy.com](http://www.allenoververy.com).

Approximate number of clerks: 10 clerkships over the 2017/18 summer break.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** We're open-minded and interested in people who share that quality. Beyond strong academic performance, we are on the lookout for candidates with strong interpersonal and communication skills, problem-solving and analytical skills, self-motivation and drive, efficiency and resilience.

**Work you can expect:** To be integrated into the firm and receive support to help you develop your knowledge and skills. You will work alongside partners and lawyers on real deals, disputes and other client matters. You will also attend dedicated training sessions and presentations aimed at broadening your understanding of our business.

**Expectations of clerks:** Demonstrate self-motivation and drive, strong communication skills, planning and organization, commitment to high standards and critical thinking skills. We also want our clerks to integrate into, and make a positive contribution to, their allocated team and embrace the culture of the firm.

**Support system during your clerkship:** You will be assigned to a practice group and buddy for the duration of the clerkship. Our lawyers are committed to helping you appreciate the underlying legal and commercial context to enhance your knowledge.

**Perks of clerking at A&O:** Exposure to complex Australian and cross-border matters while being in a close-knit office where we proudly maintain an open door policy. Throughout your clerkship, you will work directly with partners & senior lawyers, many of whom are regarded as leaders in their area of practice.

## Ashurst



**Recruitment process and dates:** We offer clerkships in each of our Australian offices. In Perth we offer two clerkships in summer and one in winter. Application and recruitment dates are aligned with the state guidelines. Firstly, you will need to decide which office you want to clerk in, and only make one application. For Perth, apply between 17 July and 6 August, 2017. Please visit our website for details of our other Australian offices.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** There is absolutely no Ashurst "type". We want to actively involve a broad range of minds with a broad range of backgrounds, all united by a common set of strengths.

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

**Your support network during your clerkship, and the work you can expect:** The aim of our clerkships is to expose you to as much real work as possible, helping you make an informed decision as to whether this is the right firm (and career) for you.

For that reason, we will allocate you a supervisor and a buddy who can explain their work to you, include you in meetings and conference calls, and give you tasks to tackle.

**Expectations of clerks:** Always have in the back of your mind ‘what do I want to achieve during my time at Ashurst?’.

- Show initiative and seek opportunities
- Ask questions
- Remember to request feedback after completing tasks
- Develop your networks – speak to as many people as possible
- Have a positive attitude

**Perks of clerking at Ashurst:** We work hard to make sure our clerkships are as useful and as stimulating as possible. Our clerkship program includes a range of activities and events designed for you to get to know us as a firm, and to find out if a career at Ashurst is what you are looking for. It includes a comprehensive induction program, events to understand each practice area and activities to ensure you build connections and relationships within the clerkship cohort and across the firm.

## Corrs Chambers Westgarth

CORRS  
CHAMBERS  
WESTGARTH  
lawyers

**Clerkship Dates:** Summer 1 Program – 27 November to 15 December 2017

Summer 2 Program – 29 January to 16 February 2018

Winter Program – 25 June to 13 July 2018

**Recruitment Process:** Apply via the firm website, complete online assessment (by invitation), attend an interview followed by coffee catch up with a Graduate, and attend a networking evening prior to the offer day.

Approximate number of clerks: 6-8 clerks per clerkship program.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** We appreciate diversity in our clerk cohorts and are not looking for identical or ‘cookie-cutter’ candidates. We look for well-round individuals with strong academic performance, evidence of work experience (law or non-law related), experience in leadership positions, volunteering or community service, and other extra-curricular activities.

**Work you can expect:** Clerks will have the opportunity to draft advice, conduct research and review documents. Clerks are also encouraged to ‘shadow’ partners and lawyers on activities such as meetings with clients, barristers or witnesses; client phone calls; and mediations, settlements and court appearances.

**Expectations of clerks:** Clerks are welcome to ask questions, participate in firm social activities and engage with all learning opportunities during their clerkship.

**Support system during your clerkship:** All clerks are assigned a Mentor and Buddy for the duration of the program.

**Perks of clerking at Corrs:** Clerks gain first-hand experience working in a premium independent national law firm, with exceptional lawyers and world class clients.



# Herbert Smith Freehills



**Recruitment Process:** CVmail submission including; brief cover letter, CV, transcript and answering a few short questions about your interest in Herbert Smith Freehills and commercial law generally. Candidates who are invited to interview complete an online assessment and join us for an informal information evening. We've prepared some guidance on our website: [careers.herbertysmithfreehills.com/au/grads/join-us](https://careers.herbertysmithfreehills.com/au/grads/join-us)

**Approximate number of clerks:** 40-45 penultimate year law students. We offer up to three clerkships per year.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** Intellectual curiosity, confidence, clarity of thought, the ambition to grow personally and professionally, and the ability to develop exceptional working relationships with clients and colleagues.

**Work you can expect:** Extensive training on all aspects of the firm, drafting and research skills, working with our lawyers as a member of our legal team, attending professional development seminars and social events.

**Expectations of clerks:** We look for exceptional people with the desire and ability to become truly brilliant lawyers. And there's more to that than just a great academic record. There's perception skills, confidence, empathy, international mindset, diligence and drive to be a part of everything.

**Support system during your clerkship:** You will be assigned a "buddy" typically a Graduate or Junior Solicitor. As well as continued support from our dedicated HR team, a partner mentor will advise you throughout your clerkship.

**Perks of clerking at Herbert Smith Freehills:** Our structured program is designed to provide the best foundation for your future success. Our learning and development program supports on-the-job learning to help you develop leadership, business development, negotiation and presentation skills.

## K&L Gates

**Clerkship Dates:** November and December 2017.

**Recruitment Process:** Applications are made via cvMail. Applicants have the opportunity to meet as many K&L Gates people as possible during the 2 round interview process, meeting with a combination of Partners/Senior Associates and HR team members. Visit [www.klgates.com](http://www.klgates.com) for details.

**Approximate number of clerks:** Five.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** Leadership experience, curiosity, maturity, passion, first-class communication skills and attributes of a team-player.

**Work you can expect:** You will be involved in real legal work. This will include participation in client meetings and court visits, research and drafting of advice and general support within one or more of our practice areas.

**Expectations of clerks:** Get involved in as much as you can, introduce yourself to people, be open to opportunities, ask questions, attend training events and take part in social activities.

**Support system during your clerkship:** A comprehensive induction program throughout your clerkship, working closely with partners and senior associates and the support of a junior lawyer or trainee lawyer as a buddy. There are also a number of social and sporting activities to help you to network with others across the firm and, most of all, have fun!

**Perks of clerking at K&L Gates:** At K&L Gates, we believe our culture is unique. It reflects the personality of our people as being down to earth, collaborative, straight-talking, socially responsible and possessing a strong work ethic. Our people are ambitious and work hard to ensure that our clients' needs are met. We also like to have fun. connect with each other in an informal and social sense so coming to work is enjoyable.

**Clerkship Dates:** we have 2 clerkship periods. Summer: November/December 2017, Winter: June/July 2018.

**Recruitment Process:** via our online application system at [kwm.com/careers](http://kwm.com/careers).

**Approximate number of clerks:** 10-15 per clerkship, subject to business needs.

**Desirable applicant attributes:** we recruit high achieving, client centric, learning agile people with an international perspective. We understand that technical excellence is only one success factor. We value a range of skills in our employees and recognise that a diversity of strengths leads to best results. We are looking for people who have an intellectual curiosity and are intrinsically motivated. Excellent marks are not necessarily a predictor of career success.

- Are you empathetic?
- Can you stand in the shoes of our client and experience the problem from their perspective?
- Is it more important to you to admire the problem or are you most interested in providing a practical, efficient and commercially sound solution?
- Are you traditional and risk averse or are you excited by a changing and fluid work environment?
- When you think about your career are you only focused on Australia, or do you appreciate that Australia's closest neighbours are the new power houses of the global economy?
- We believe in team work and the 'Power of Together'. We are not a collection of siloed practices, but work closely across the network to pursue client opportunities. Through a high performance culture our results are realised through collaboration, innovation and engagement.

#### **Work you can expect:**

- The day-to-day skills to get you started – taking instructions, meeting with clients, drafting memos and documents, managing your practice and professional relationships.
- The core practice teams at King & Wood Mallesons – who they are, what they do, how they're structured, the clients they work for, and of course, your role within them.
- Our culture – working within your team, you'll be exposed to (and encouraged) to get actively involved in the many activities and events that help create our unique culture.
- Our people – you'll find that people from every part of the business will help you along, sharing their knowledge, and ensuring you have everything you need to fit in, and do well.
- Expectations of clerks: be curious and passionate. Get involved and take the opportunities that are presented to you and get to know our people and our culture.

**Support system during your clerkship:** Clerks are assigned a Supervising Partner, Development Coach (who is usually a Senior Associate) and a Buddy (usually a graduate or junior lawyer).

#### **Perks of clerking at King & Wood Mallesons:**

- Meaningful work covering a wide range of practice areas
- Client or direct Partner contact and an in-depth understanding of how they operate in a commercial and regulatory environment
- The opportunity to work with a range of partners, senior associates and solicitors in different practice groups
- A practical understanding of areas of our legal practice

**Clerkship Dates:** We generally run three clerkships each year, one through Winter and two through Summer. Please see our website for the dates.

**Recruitment Process:** CV through the MinterEllison careers website, complete online psychometric questionnaire, interview required, attend information seminar at the firm.

**Approximate number of clerks:** We have clerkship opportunities in each of our practice group areas every program intake. With eight busy practice group areas this means we have approximately 21 clerkship opportunities each year.

**Desirable applicant attributes:**

- Your passion for excellence leads you to winning solutions.
- Building relationships excites you. You see yourself working in partnership with clients.
- Innovative. You think outside the box and embrace new ideas.
- You want to feel empowered and be part of a high performing team.
- Collaboration and inclusiveness are principles you value.
- You're looking for a Firm with a clear game plan.

**Work you can expect:** Legal research, drafting submissions, preparing advice, making presentations, attending external client meetings or attending court, as required.

**Expectations of clerks:** Respect all staff, ask questions, work collaboratively with your practice group buddy and supervisor, complete all work and at a high level, engage in firm wide social and networking activities that are offered to you.

**Support system during your clerkship:** All clerks are assigned a buddy and reserve buddy within the practice area.

**Perks of clerking at MinterEllison:** Our clerkships are an opportunity to work in a top tier multinational firm with top lawyers who are industry recognised and renowned for their excellence and business acumen. In attending a clerkship program with MinterEllison, we ensure that you have all the information you need to make the right decision about where to focus your career. Our program is designed to give you the critical experiences necessary to become a well-rounded lawyer.



**Graduate Recruitment Dates:**

- Applications open 26 June 2017 and close 11 August 2017
- Review and interview Monday 14 August to Friday 8 September 2017
- Offers made 15 September 2017
- Graduates start employment in February 2018

**Recruitment Process:**

- Apply through CV Mail
- Complete Online Personality Questionnaire (to be confirmed)
- Interview
- Attend networking event at the firm (to be confirmed)

**Approximate number of Law Graduates:**

- 3 – 4 Graduates

**Desirable applicant attributes:**

- Collaborative
- Entrepreneurial and innovative
- Fearless
- Embrace change and diversity
- Professionalism and integrity
- Commerciality

**Work you can expect:**

- Work with collaborative, entrepreneurial driven people who will support you in your learning and development as a Graduate
- Exposed to large scale projects and cross boarder transactional work from day one
- Direct exposure to global clients
- To rapidly build legal skills in a fast paced, supportive environment
- Flexibility and support in your learning

**Expectations of Law Graduates:**

- Willingness to learn
- Collaborate with colleagues to achieve best results for you and our clients
- Be involved

**Support system during your clerkship:**

- Assigned a 'buddy' in respective team who is Associate 1 level
- Assigned a Responsible Person in respective team who is Senior Associate level

**Perks of being Graduate at Squire Patton Boggs:**

- College of Law and Admission costs paid for
- Paid study days provided over the course of your Graduate year
- Up to 3 6-monthly rotations in different practice groups to give you full exposure to the diverse areas of law
- Customised and adaptable learning programs designed for you to ensure you are progressing at your own rate
- Opportunities for inter-office travel
- Opportunities to work with our global offices on international work

# International Clerkships



Allen & Overy is an international law firm with offices in over 30 countries, employing over 5,000 staff globally. Allen & Overy practice in a number of areas, including asset management, public law, insurance, intellectual property, and banking and finance.

## Clerkships

Allen & Overy offer Summer clerkships in their Sydney and Perth offices. Applications for the program must be completed online and include a covering letter, CV and academic transcript. Application dates for our 2016/17 clerkship program will be updated on the Allen & Overy webpage shortly

## Contact Details

Address: Level 27, Exchange Plaza, 2 The

Esplanade, Perth WA 6000

P: (08) 6315 5900

E: [australia@allenoverly.com](mailto:australia@allenoverly.com)

W: [www.allenoverly.com/careers/](http://www.allenoverly.com/careers/)

# Baker & McKenzie



Baker & McKenzie is a global law firm with 75 offices located worldwide, employing over 4000 staff.

## Clerkships

Each year, Baker & McKenzie awards 20 International Clerkships to law students and recent graduates interested in exploring an international legal career with the Firm. Recipients typically work with Baker & McKenzie lawyers in two different countries over a 12-week period. An International Clerkship is only available if you wish to apply for a permanent work contract. Clerks are selected on the basis of their legal ability, interest in pursuing an international practice and facility in English, as well as the working languages of the locations where they will work (if other than English). Further information is available on the website.

## Contact Details

Address: Level 27, A.M.P. Centre, 50 Bridge

Street, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia

P: (02) 9225 0200

W: [www.bakermckenzie.com/careers/](http://www.bakermckenzie.com/careers/)

Clifford Chance is a global law firm based in London with other offices in major business centres of the world, and a staff base of over 3000 people. Clifford Chance has Australian offices in Sydney and Perth, working in the banking, consumer, energy and resources, industrials, insurance, private equity and real estate sectors.

## Clerkships & Internships

Clifford Chance offers clerkships and internships worldwide. Students should check the website for further information.

### Contact Details

Address: Level 7, 190 St Georges Terrace

Perth WA 6000

P: (08) 9262 5555

W: [www.cliffordchance.com/careers.html](http://www.cliffordchance.com/careers.html)

# DLA Piper



DLA Piper is a global law firm, employing over 4000 lawyers in more than 30 countries around the world. Some of DLA Piper's practice areas include corporate, employment, finance and projects, intellectual property and technology, litigation and regulatory, real estate, restructuring and tax.

## Clerkships

DLA Piper offers seasonal clerkships to students in their penultimate year. Further information is available on the website.

### Contact Details

Address: Level 31 Central Park, 152-158 St Georges Terrace

Perth WA 6000

P: (08) 6467 6000

W: [www.dlapipergraduates.com.au](http://www.dlapipergraduates.com.au)



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Jones Day is an international law firm with over 37 offices worldwide, employing over 2000 lawyers, making it the third largest law firm in the world. Jones Day has offices in Brisbane, Sydney and Perth.

## Clerkships

Jones Day Sydney takes part in the NSW Summer Clerkship Scheme. The Perth and Brisbane office are currently not taking clerks. Summer clerks spend 10 weeks during November, December and January developing their legal and commercial skills. They offer a unique non-rotational training system, giving our summer clerks the immediate flexibility and freedom to work in a number of practice areas, ranging from mergers & acquisitions to labour & employment to litigation and insolvency.

Summer clerks are assigned with mentors and supervising partners to guide them through their development.

## Contact Details

Address: Aurora Place, Level 41, 88 Phillip St

Sydney, NSW 2000

P: (02) 8272 0500

E: [sydneyrecruiting@jonesday.com](mailto:sydneyrecruiting@jonesday.com)

W: [www.jonesday.com/sydney/](http://www.jonesday.com/sydney/)

# Hogan Lovells



Hogan Lovells is a global legal practice that helps corporations, financial institutions, and governmental entities across the spectrum of their critical business and legal issues globally and locally. They have over 2,500 lawyers operating out of more than 40 offices in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and the United States.

## Internships

Hogan Lovells offer internships in a variety of their international offices. Further information can be found on the website.

## Contact Details

Level 13 St Georges Square, 225 St Georges Terrace  
Perth WA 6000

P: +44 20 7296 2000

W: [www.hoganlovells.com/careers\\_landing.as px](http://www.hoganlovells.com/careers_landing.as px)



Linklaters has a commanding presence across the full range of corporate, finance and commercial law. This, partnered with our culture of innovation, teamwork and entrepreneurship, means that we have built strong relationships with the world's leading companies, financial institutions and governments, advising them on their most important and challenging transactions and assignments. Linklaters practices in the following areas: banks, energy, resources and infrastructure, technology, healthcare and consumer industries.

## Clerkships

Linklaters welcome applications from all leading Australian universities and typically receive applications from around seven different universities across Australia. The scheme lasts for four weeks and runs from November to December. They will reimburse the cost of your flights and organise accommodation for you during this time, whilst also paying you throughout the scheme. The clerkship is based in London, and further information is available on the website.

Applications Open: 1 March 2016 Applications Close: 29 April 2016

## Contact Details

Address: 1 Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8HQ

P: (44 20) 7456 2000

E: [graduate.recruitment@linklaters.com](mailto:graduate.recruitment@linklaters.com)

W: [www.linklatersgraduates.co.uk](http://www.linklatersgraduates.co.uk)

# Simmons & Simmons

Simmons & Simmons is an international law practice with over 1500 staff and 22 offices located throughout the major business and financial centres over Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

## Vacation Schemes

Simmons & Simmons offer three separate vacation schemes through the year. Only 90 places are available, and students should apply as soon as possible. Students should check the website for further information.

## Contact Details

W: <http://graduates.simmons-simmons.com/en/English-Graduate>

# Clerkship Experience Articles



# Clerk at Norton Rose Fulbright



The Norton Rose Fulbright clerkship is completely different to any other clerkship in Perth. I was fortunate enough to be part of their unique 10 week clerkship. During my time there I learnt a lot and had many experiences. This means I could write way too much about what I did so I am going to try and limit this to the main benefits of the 10 week clerkship:

## **Getting to know the firm:**

It is extremely difficult to get to know a firm properly within the typical 3 week clerkship. 10 weeks gives you the opportunity to meet everybody in the firm and get to know the firm as a whole. At Norton Rose Fulbright I also had the opportunity to meet lawyers and clerks from the other Australian offices, Johannesburg office and Calgary office. In my opinion, one of the most important factors when finding your ideal firm is the people. 10 weeks allows you to get to know the people and find out if you fit. During my 10 weeks I came to know Norton Rose Fulbright as a firm that was extremely supportive and somewhere that I fit and could see myself working.

## **Extra rotations:**

In most clerkships you spend your time in one practice team. At Norton Rose Fulbright I had the opportunity of doing 2 rotations in different practice teams. This meant that I was able to get practical experience in 2 different areas of law. The rotations were also five weeks long which meant that I was able to work on larger matters and see some matters through to their conclusion. This type of experience does not exist in other clerkships.

## **Better training:**

At Norton Rose Fulbright the clerks were given constant training for the duration of the clerkship. The training included induction training at the start of the clerkship, 'masterclass' training on presentation skills, personal branding and communication skills halfway through the clerkship, firm focused seminars throughout the duration of the clerkship, and training sessions that we attended with the other lawyers at the firm.

## **Graduate offers:**

Norton Rose Fulbright has a reputation of always offering graduate positions to their clerks. This is more or less true. During the recruitment process they pick 5 clerks who they want and invest substantial effort and resources into them over the 10 week period. As a result of this the clerks are often offered graduate positions because they have had 10 weeks to impress the partners and firm generally.

While there is lots more that I could write about Norton Rose Fulbright, and my clerkship specifically, these are the four most notable factors that set Norton Rose Fulbright's clerkship process apart from every other firm in Perth.

Joshua Richards

Final Year Law/Criminology Student

# Clerk at King & Wood Mallesons



## My experience at a global law firm

I was very fortunate to clerk at King & Wood Mallesons (**KWM**) at the end of 2016 and spent three weeks in a busy commercial litigation team. KWM is an international firm with offices dotted all around the world. This is reflected in the Perth office by the vast number of practice areas and both the local and international clients they serve.

## What work did I do?

As a clerk, you will very likely be given research tasks. I did two – one on an area of law I had covered in my last semester, and one I had never even heard of! Fear not – your orientation acquaints you with the firm's extensive resources and the best way to go about legal research (Lawlex and CCH are lifesavers).

I also brushed up on my Excel skills to help organise data, drafted a letter, and proof-read pleadings. My team were very inclusive, so I sat in every team meeting, most client meetings, two witness interviews, and also went along to court.

## What skills did I gain?

I have already touched on the work that I was involved in – for me, clerking is a fantastic opportunity to find out how a firm operates and discover what the law is really about. Clerkships are an opportunity to put the skills you have into practice and then build on them. Everyone is taught clear writing in their first year of law school – now write a memo for your partner. Did you ever do a moot or trial advocacy? You're now doing a presentation on an area of law to your entire floor.

## What attracted me to the firm?

KWM always struck me as a high-performing firm with high quality work. My experience in the clerkship process was excellent – the information night was engaging and I had a very comfortable interview with staff who seemed genuinely interested in me as a person.

Clerking at KWM was a fantastic experience, not only because I was exposed to so much of the work they do, but also because I had a team that wanted me to be there and get me involved.

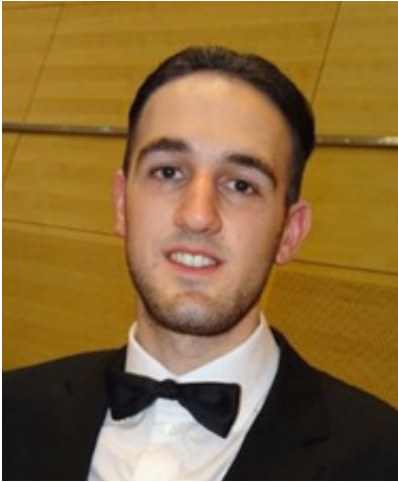
## My tips and tricks

- Never look down on a task. Approach all the work you do with enthusiasm, even if you think it's menial.
- Don't be afraid to ask your assigned buddy some questions – most firms will have some form of IM system, so use this to interact with the graduates and junior lawyers.
- Be organised – learn how to use the firm's document management system and file your emails!
- Never disrespect your fellow clerks. Competitiveness only goes so far, so help each other out and make friends.

Emily Bell

Final year Law/Criminology Student

## Clerk at Tottle Partners



My name is Clinton Bonomelli and in September 2016 I graduated from Murdoch University with a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce (Management). During July 2016 I clerked at Tottle Partners and I thoroughly enjoyed this experience. I would highly recommend applying there for a clerkship.

Tottle Partners is an excellent commercial law firm on St Georges Terrace with around 50 employees, a good sized firm, practising commercial, corporate, construction, insurance and property law, amongst other areas. At a firm like Tottle Partners, you can get your teeth into pretty much anything and you are never placed into a silo like you would be further down the Terrace. What I mean is, you get a range of types of work.

I was loosely based in the general commercial, insurance and litigation teams, but I was never limited to any particular area. At these kinds of firms you get straight down to business, there are no facades, no big lunch shows, no propaganda and it is all real work. A law clerk actually contributes to matters.

After a brief introduction I began working with an associate on a substantial corporate litigation matter, undertaking insolvency based research. Later that day, I assisted with a large ongoing Supreme Court vessel construction matter. I was introduced to all the seniors and juniors and was assigned with a very helpful and friendly graduate buddy.

Over the course of the first week I assisted with an ongoing property matter involving a range of loans and mortgages. I attended client meetings, sat in on telephone conversations and maintained direct contact with the client. I was working with a senior lawyer on this matter and we often discussed it. He was always open to listening and I felt appreciated. On Thursday and Friday nights we would have a chat and a glass of wine.

During the course of the week I was invited to a number of social functions, business development sessions and CPD sessions. These were a chance to get to know the staff in a less formal setting. I was lucky enough to be invited to the annual Western Australia Law Society Golden Gavel event, a night of drinks, eating and listening to a ton of specific legal jokes - it's really great, you should try it.

Over the second week I continued working on the property matter and another gas/construction arbitration matter. But for me, the best part was when I took on an entire file myself for a week. We had an insurance matter, acting for an insurance provider. A senior associate tasked me with getting a file in order. She gave me a pile of documents in all sorts of order and I organised these documents and prepared a memorandum. This memorandum was used to directly contact the client on potential 'next steps'. When we called the client, they were happy and I felt that my work was valued.

Ultimately, be open minded. Try a range of firms and areas of law and try not to pigeonhole yourself. Speak with as many people as you can, and take up all opportunities to attend lunches, after work events and client meetings and hearings.

Clinton Bonomelli

2016 Murdoch Law Graduate

## Clerk at Clayton Utz



In November and December 2016, I had the opportunity to clerk at Clayton Utz for three weeks. Clayton Utz always stood out to me as an exceptional law firm with interesting practice groups, which is why I applied for a clerkship. My first day began by meeting the other slightly nervous looking clerks in the foyer, before diving into comprehensive training — learning how to use the computer filing systems, write a clear and concise memo, and use the coffee machine.

From there, we were put into our practice groups. I secured a spot in the litigation/intellectual property team, who made an effort to get to know me and to understand which aspects of the law I was interested in, and then sent this type of work my way. I ended up drafting provisions of a contract for the assignment of intellectual property rights, as well as a wide range of other tasks, ranging from high quality legal research to editing criminal injury submissions.

The clerkship program was extremely well structured. We were each given a buddy and supervisor in our practice group who helped us get work and whom we could go to with any queries. A highlight for me was working with the Perth pro-bono coordinator (who was also my supervisor) on a pro bono matter throughout my three weeks. Another highlight was how the lawyers made a concerted effort to show me whenever my work was sent to clients or included in submissions.

My clerkship wasn't all work through! The clerks were also able to take part in a number of excellent charity events such as the Food Rescue initiative where we ran up and down St George's Terrace collecting left over food from cafes and restaurants to share with disadvantaged people around Perth. We also had opportunities to hear from each of the practice groups about their main clients and the type of work they do. I was also able to attend both the firm and the litigation team's Christmas parties, which allowed me to get to know the people at Clayton Utz in a more relaxed environment.

Clayton Utz is a social firm that has interesting, high quality work and interesting people. Some advice for students embarking on the clerkship process this year: get to know the people and let them get to know you. Many top national and international firms will have similar scale work; the people make the difference.

Pro tip — your buddy is a valuable source of knowledge, use them! I found it most useful to ask my buddy to edit some of my work, point me in the right direction for research and insight into how certain lawyers like their work presented.

Heather Costelloe

Final year Law Student



# Clerk at The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions



Clerking at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) was exciting, fast-paced and challenging.

Unlike other clerkships I've experienced, there was no formal induction process or buddy system. However, everyone is really passionate about their work and keen to talk about their cases and answer questions.

My clerkship with the ODPP was for two weeks in summer after the Christmas period. After the "silly season" there was plenty of work to go around, so it was a fantastic time to be in the office.

On my first day, I had a brief introduction with my team's consultant prosecutor. Within five minutes I was asked if I would like to help one of the senior Prosecutors at a five-day trial that was starting that morning. Obviously, I was ecstatic and replied with a resounding "yes"! Before I was shown to my desk, I was off to court.

The trial related to serious sexual offending and I could see from the Brief that most of the evidence was going to be very confronting. It all became real to me when we met with the victim and the detectives before the trial began.

During the trial, I experienced a variety of emotions: excitement at being involved in a trial, sadness and anger for the victim when the evidence was presented in court, satisfaction when our evidence was delivered effectively and impatience and anxiety when waiting for the jury to deliver their verdict.

Needless to say, the trial was a steep learning curve for me. No case, book or TV show came anywhere close to teaching me what I learned from being part of a jury trial with a number of serious charges, several witnesses and confronting evidence.

This trial concluded at the end of my first week. During my second week, I worked with a number of different Prosecutors and attended a range of different hearings such as a Committal Mention, a Directions Hearing, a Sentencing and a Trial Listing Hearing.

I also conducted legal research, compiled evidence, wrote internal memoranda recommending the appropriate charges for indictments and drafted indictments. I also drafted submissions to be used at the Sentencing at the trial I attended the week prior.

If you like learning a lot and quickly, being surrounded by interesting and passionate people, court work and are motivated by the pursuit of justice, I strongly recommend a clerkship at the ODPP.

Adriana Costanzo

Final year Law and Criminology student



## Clerk at the Ombudsman



I completed a Clerkship with the Ombudsman of Western Australia from January – February 2014. I applied at the Ombudsman of WA because I had recently completed and enjoyed Administrative Law and I thought that the clerkship would be a good opportunity to take the knowledge from Admin law and see how everything works in practice. I also applied because I had never completed a clerkship before, so I wanted a chance to gain confidence in applying some of the skills I had been working on through law school.

The Ombudsman of WA has several areas of responsibility. The first is to undertake its own motion investigations as well as undertaking other strategies to improve public administration. The second is its complaint handling and dispute resolution processes from members of the public about areas such as energy and water services. The third is monitoring and reporting on the operation of powers conferred on the WA Police and inspection of telecommunications interception records. The last is review of investigable child deaths and deaths due to family violence.

During my clerkship I worked autonomously on a project for the Director of Energy and Water. The Ombudsman of WA had recently acquired the water jurisdiction through changes to legislation and my project was to identify and advise the Ombudsman on the Water Services Act (and associated regulations) and their practical effect. I drafted legal research memorandums, practice notes, reports and training notes in order to communicate the legislative scheme to not only the Director of Energy and Water, but also to other team members in the Energy & Water Division. Additionally during my clerkship I attended office meetings, conducted other legal research, amended existing reports and liaised with different departments to understand their structure and interactions within the Ombudsman.

I enjoyed my experience at the Ombudsman because the office was full of really lovely and supportive people that made you feel like part of their team. I knew that the work I was doing was important and I could see the value of my contribution. This experience not only gave me a fantastic insight into the varied work that the Ombudsman undertakes but it also gave me valuable experience applying the knowledge and skills that I had obtained through my degree.

Nicola Thomas-Evans

Final year JD student

# Clerk at The Supreme Court of Western Australia



In December 2016 I completed the Summer Court Clerkship Program. The program runs for 2 weeks in December each year. 15 students are selected from Murdoch, Notre Dame and UWA (5 students from each university). The program is facilitated by the High Court but takes place in the state courts.

At the start of the clerkship you are told which court you will be clerking in and which judge you have been assigned to. The Supreme Court of Western Australia, the Federal Court, the District Court of Western Australia, the Federal Circuit Court and the Family Court of Western Australia participate in the program. You will clerk at two different courts, one week in each court. I started off my clerkship in the Supreme Court of Western Australia with the Hon. Justice Newnes and his associates Susanah and Cathy. Justice

Newnes is a judge in the Court of Appeal and primarily presides on civil matters. During the week I witnessed the day-to-day duties of a judge's associate and after getting lost several times, became very familiar with the layout of both the old Supreme Court and new David Malcolm Justice Centre (the new Supreme Court building). I sat in on directions hearings, CMC matters and parts of trials. I also got the opportunity to announce a few cases in court (this meant that I got to wear robes, which to be honest, was super exciting).

On top of spending the day with the judge's associates in court, the clerkship program also involved attending seminars on most days. These seminars primarily focused on the procedure in the different courts. However, we also had seminars on advocacy and were lucky enough to spend an hour chatting with the Hon. Chief Justice Martin. That was one of the highlights of my clerkship. We heard Chief Justice Martin's position on equality for women in the legal field and on restorative justice and rehabilitation in crime.

In the second week of my clerkship I was placed in the District Court with Judge Stephenson and his associates Kate and Megan. Judge Stephenson presides primarily over criminal matters. While in the District Court I observed the trial process, for a criminal matter, from start to end.

Overall I really enjoyed my time doing the Summer Clerkship Program, it was a valuable experience where I learnt a load about the court processes, made some instrumental connections, meet a lot of cool people and had a really fun time.

## **You should apply if:**

- You don't know what type of law you want to do
- You want to gain some court experience
- You really want to be a judge's associate
- You want to make invaluable connections
- You want to learn more about the court system and legal processes
- You want to learn about court room advocacy

## **When should you apply?**

- Before your penultimate year if you intend to apply for other clerkships in your penultimate year
- In your penultimate year if you are not clerking elsewhere
- In your final year if you have not secured a graduate position (I know at least one of the girls who clerked secured an associateship at the District Court because she had graduated).

## **Handy Tips:**

- The correct way to address the judge you are working with is "judge"
- Telegram next to the Justice Centre does amazing coffee
- Wear flats ladies! There is too much walking between courts for seminars/hearings in this clerkship to manage heels
- Remember you are going to court every day... dress accordingly...
- Be yourself!

Kala Campbell

Penultimate year Law/Commerce Student



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