

**The University of Notre Dame
Law Society**



**2025
Competitions
Guide**



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DIRECTOR FOREWORD



WELCOME TO THE 2025 COMPETITIONS GUIDE!

My name is Kiara Beard and I am the 2025 Competitions Director for the University of Notre Dame Sydney Law Society (NDSLS).

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2025 Competitions Guide. This comprehensive guide is designed to help you navigate NDSLS competitions to make the most of your law school experience this year.

Competitions provide a unique opportunity to gain practical legal experience and develop key legal skills through real-world simulations. They are also a great way to connect with peers and like-minded individuals in the broader legal community.

Whether you are a first-time participant or a seasoned competitor, I highly encourage everyone to get involved and take advantage of this year's fantastic opportunities.

**Best of luck - I can't wait to see you all competing! Kiara Beard
2025 Competitions Director
Notre Dame Sydney Law Society**



President's WELCOME



It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the 2025 edition of the Notre Dame Sydney Law Society's Competitions Guide.

My name is Mary and I am so fortunate to be you 2025 President and to welcome you to this guide.

At Notre Dame, we believe that studying law is about far more than just attending lectures and sitting exams — it's about building practical skills, forging strong professional relationships, and developing the confidence to think critically, advocate persuasively, and step into the legal profession with conviction. Competitions form a cornerstone of this experience. Whether it's mooting, negotiation, client interviewing or witness examination, these opportunities are designed to challenge and inspire you, bridging the gap between theory and real-world legal practice.

Taking part in competitions will not only develop your legal knowledge, but also sharpen your communication, teamwork, strategic thinking and resilience — all qualities that are essential for any successful lawyer. More than that, competitions provide a unique opportunity to learn from your peers, receive valuable feedback from legal professionals, and build the confidence that will serve you well throughout your career.

The Notre Dame Sydney Law Society is incredibly proud of the competitions programme we offer. Thanks to the hard work of our Vice President (Competitions), the Competitions Team, and our generous volunteer judges and mentors, we are able to offer opportunities for students at all stages - from first year introductory rounds to national and international competitions. This guide has been carefully prepared to help you navigate those opportunities, offering practical advice, tips, and insights to set you up for success.

If you are new to competitions, I encourage you to take a chance and get involved. Every seasoned competitor started out exactly where you are now. It doesn't matter if you don't win your first round — what matters is that you step outside your comfort zone, back yourself, and embrace the opportunity to learn. You'll be amazed at how much you can grow from even a single competition experience. If you are returning to competitions, I encourage you to set ambitious goals, mentor those who are new to the experience, and continue to challenge yourself to refine your skills even further.

Competitions are about much more than winning rounds; they're about building character, forming friendships, and preparing yourself for the realities of legal practice. They are also, without doubt, some of the most enjoyable and rewarding experiences you'll have during your time at law school.

On behalf of the entire Notre Dame Sydney Law Society, I wish you all the very best as you embark on your competition/s journey this year. Throw yourself into the experience, support one another, and most importantly — enjoy the process. You are capable of achieving incredible things.

I look forward to seeing the talent, creativity and dedication you bring to competitions in 2025.

Mary Charbel Khater 2025
President Notre Dame Sydney
Law Society



Law School Lecturer Address

I am very pleased to commend the 2025 NDSLS Competitions Guide to you. This year is the 20th year of our law school here on the Sydney campus. Throughout that time, the school has benefitted greatly from the enthusiasm and commitment of our staff and students, including the significant contribution of the NDSLS to many activities outside the classroom which enhance our community. Notre Dame is so much more than a law school – we are a family where we try to know each person by name and we strive to help each other to become the best version of ourselves.

This Guide contains details of a range of competitions being held during 2025. I strongly encourage all students to participate in some competitions during their time at law school. These are great ways to make friends, build your self-confidence and enhance your skills in various forms of public speaking (including mooting, client interviewing and negotiations) as part of your training to be members of the legal profession.

Some of our most successful students in our internal competitions have gone on to represent our school in external competitions such as those organised by ALSA and the Vis international Commercial Arbitration Moot in Vienna (where one of our students won the award for equal best speaker in the competition). In Semester 1, we have a Contract Law moot against ACU, which will be held in the Supreme Court of NSW. I wish all competitors the best of luck and thank the NDSLS committee members in advance for their work this year.

Professor Gerard Ryan
Program Coordinator (Sydney)
Notre Dame Law School



COMPETITIONS



Client Interviews

What Are Client Interviews?

Two competitors have as short amount of time to build rapport, understand the client's story and provide sound legal advice to the client

Basic Rules

Competitors are given 30 minutes to conduct a client interview

At any time, competitors can opt for a 5 minute break (the timer stops) to confer privately

After the interview, competitors have 10 minutes to reflect with the judge on their performance

Aims

- Ascertain relevant facts and legal issues Offer
 - preliminary legal advice Maintain a professional
 - working relationship
-

Mooting

What is Mooting?

Asimulated appealin a superior court, competitors are given a set of facts and decisions from the lower court and must argue whether this decision was correct.

Basic Rules

Teams of 2 or 3

Junior mooting for Years 1 and 2

Senior mooting for Years 3 and above

Teams will be judged on how well they know their information and how well they argue their points

Aims

- Complete a written submission containing a summary of your arguments
 - Compete in an oral competition to deliver your arguments and respond to the judge's questions
-

Negotiations

What is Negotiations?

Negotiations is a mock mediation, involving a hypothetical factual scenario, where two parties are in dispute.

Basic Rules

Teams of 2

Competitors are provided with a set of 'general' and 'confidential' facts

Negotiations will occur for 30 minutes

Teams will have 5 to 10 minutes for reflection

Aims

- Negotiate an agreement to the dispute that satisfies your client's instructions
 - Identify your client's interests
-

Paper Presentations

What are Paper Presentations?

Competitors individually draft a written paper addressing a legal issue and present their paper to a panel of judges

Basic Rules

Accompanied by a 25 minute oral presentation

15 minutes speaking 10 minutes
answering judges questions

Paper is approximately 3,000 to 5,000
words

Aims

- Explain your idea Persuade the audience
 - to your viewpoint
-

Witness Examinations

What are Witness Examinations?

Simulating a trial, competitors provide accounts of the same incident whilst examining witnesses to support their arguments

Basic Rules

1 or 2 Barristers

Includes a non-competitive witness

Teams will be judged on their court etiquette and questioning

Aims

- Prepare your witness Elicit evidence
 - Establish the credibility of your witness
-

TESTIMONIALS



Jacob Rodda

2nd Year Student

Bachelor of Laws / Bachelor of PPE



Law competitions at the University of Notre Dame are a great way to develop legal analysis skills, public speaking, confidence, critical thinking, and argumentative skills. It's also a great way to network and make new long lasting friends.

The developmental opportunities that the competitions can provide is immense and looks great on a resume when perusing legal careers in the future. It's a great way to get a practical grasp of what the legal proceedings are like and is an overall fun experience that I personally enjoyed and would recommend!

Virginia Dzieciol

2nd Year Student

Bachelor of Laws /Bachelor of Commerce

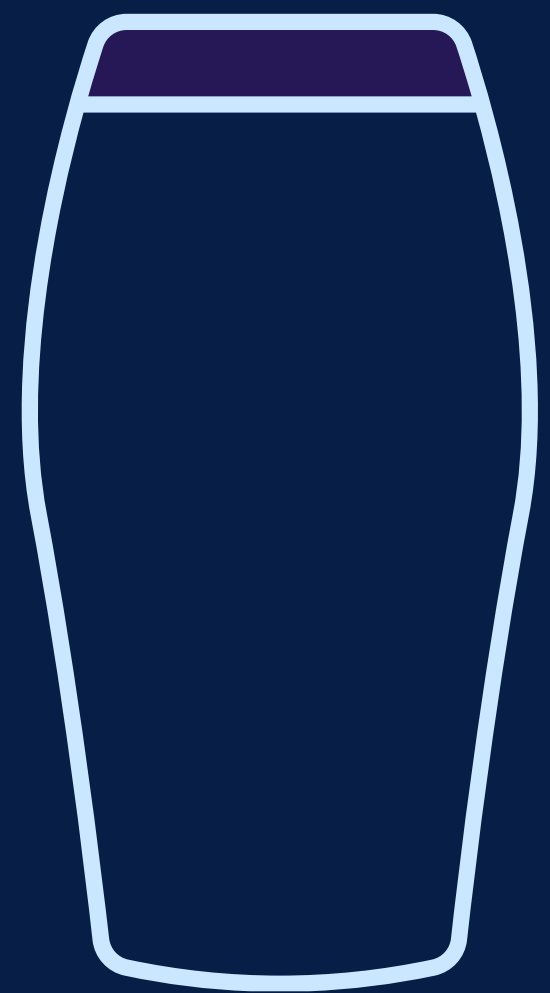


I would like to begin by thanking Kiara Beard, our 2025 Competitions Director, and all who contribute to make Law Competitions a success at our university. It is no small task to organise but the benefits made available to law students as a result are incalculable and essential to the law school experience.

My involvement in mooting began during my first year at law school during which I participated and won both first and second semester mooting competitions that year. I obtained many benefits from participate in mooting and other competitions at Notre Dame that were often unexpected.

Regardless of whether you win a competition, every mooter is a winner. After even just one moot you will have acquired or strengthened many invaluable skills crucial to the legal profession.

DRESS CODE



Dress Code: Business Attire

**Important to enhance professionalism, credibility
and confidence in competitions**

What is Business Attire?

- **Blazers**
- **Collared Shirt**
- **Suit**
- **Business Dresses**
- **Polished Dress Shoes**
- **Sensible Socks or Stockings (neutral, black)**
- **Plain Tie**
- **Blouse or Dress Shirt**
- **Skirt or Pant Suit**

General Business Attire Colours:

Black, Charcoal, Navy, Grey

GENERAL PRINCIPLES



General Rules

- 1.This document provides the rules, which shall govern participation in the Notre Dame Sydney Law Society ('the NDSLS') Competitions
- 2.The Competitions fall within the portfolio of the 'Competitions Director', who shall be responsible for the enforcement of these rules and the overall supervision of the competitions
 - a.all decisions of the Competitions Director are final unless otherwise specified in this document
- 3.Email 'competitions@ndsls.org' for any problems, queries or concerns
 - a.Similarly, correspondence should be via student (Notre Dame) emails. Any other source shall not be deemed as official
- 4.Competitions are run in accordance to the NDSLS rules - competitors should familiarise themselves with these rules before competing

Competitor's Obligations

1. Participation in Competitions signifies an agreement to abide by the rules and guidelines set out within this document
2. Participation in the Competitions is open to all students currently enrolled in a 'Bachelor of Laws' at the University of Notre Dame Sydney Campus
3. In order to participate in the NDSLS Legal Skills Competitions, students must submit their registration to the Competitions in the method that the Competitions Director prescribes
 - a. Registration must be made through online forms. Should there be any issues please email 'competitions@ndsls.org'
4. Registrations must be received by the allocated date. Acceptance of late entries will be at the discretion of the Competitions Director
5. In keeping with the professional expectations of the NDSLS, we request you comply with the guidelines of the Dress Code, observable at page 16

6. The Competitions Director reserves the right to disqualify any team or participant for:
 - a. A breach of the rules in this document
 - b. A breach of any University and/or Law School rules
 - c. Conduct that is not befitting to the competitions including, but not limited to:
 - i. Being late or failing to turn up to a competition;
 - ii. Failing to respect the authority or misleading judges or organisers;
 - iii. Failing to show suitable respect or misleading fellow competitors;
 - iv. Making a serious ethical violation
7. The preliminary decisions to the above are of the Competitions Director, however, the final decision resides in the joint agreement of the President of the NDSLS
8. Competitors are not permitted to use mobile phones during competitions, except as a timekeeping device. This must be made clear to the judge

9. Responsibility rests with the attending NDSLs members (presumed to be the Competitions Director or Assistant Director) for timekeeping and for adherence to allotted time periods and breaks. However, if resources and volunteers are available, timekeepers or timekeeping devices may be provided, but no individual associated with a participant may act as timekeeper in a competition involving such participant

10. The Competitions Director will be contactable via email: 'competitions@ndsls.org'

11. Once competitions have commenced, there shall be no modifications made to teams subject to the Competition Director's discretion

a. modifications to teams may be made at the latest 24 hours prior to the nominated time for round one

b. For the Mooting competitions, modifications may be made to a team at the latest 24 hours prior to the submission of arguments

12. After 24 hours, a forfeit will automatically be applied and the team disqualified from the competitions

13. If a team is unable to participate in a particular round after the commencement of competitions, the team must forfeit, unless suitable arrangements can be made. This will depend on:

a. the availability of judges and venues;

b. the availability of the opposing team to reschedule;

c. the reason for inability to compete

d. discretion of the Competitions Director

14. Whilst all attempts will be made, there is no guarantee or obligation placed on the Competitions Director

Observers Obligations

1. Observation of the Competition is encouraged, however potential for disruption must be minimised

2. No observer shall attempt to communicate in any way with any team members during competition

NDSLS Obligations

- 1.The competition's structure is set forth as:
 - a.All competitors compete in each preliminary round of the competition
 - b.The highest-ranking teams will advance to the next rounds
 - c.The remaining competitors are ranked on a reserve list according to scores
- 2.All decisions of judges in competitions are final. In the event of a tie, the aggregate scores will be used to make a final decision
- 3.Any concerns or appeals must be made initially to the Competitions Director
 - a.An appeal must be either administrative or equitable in nature
- 4.if a party wishes to compete in a competition representing the NDSLS, they first must get the permission of the Competitions Director and President of the Law Society

5. Subject to the discretion of the NDSLS, the winner(s) of the Competitions may be invited to represent the University of Notre Dame Sydney at the Australia Law Students Association Annual Conference (ALSA)
6. The NDSLS is not under any circumstances obliged to invite a competitor to compete at ALSA
7. The Competitions Director and the NDSLS Executive may invite a runner-up or persons of high standard to compete at the ALSA conference.
8. All rules in this document are applied at the discretion of the NDSLS and may be edited, amended or applied in any way they see fit.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has read this guide. Here at the Notre Dame Sydney Law Society, every member is committed to providing law students with the best opportunities and resources.

I would like to thank the following people for their contribution and time in making this guide.

- **Professor David Carter (Head of Law School)**
- **Professor Gerard Ryan (Sydney Lecturer)**
- **Mary Charbel Khater (NDSLS President)**
- **Alana Oxley (NDSLS Vice President)**
- **Jacob Rodda**
- **Virginia Dzieciol**

To keep up to date with Competitions at NDSLS, please follow our socials as seen below.





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