

# CAREERS GUIDE

# 2022



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A WORD FROM THE 2025 NDSLS PRESIDENT

# FOREWORD

Welcome! It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2025 edition of the Notre Dame Sydney Law Society Careers Guide.

This publication is one of the most important resources we produce each year, and it exists for one reason alone: to support you! Whether you are in your first year, just beginning to navigate the world of clerkships, or in your final semester and wondering what lies ahead, we hope this guide offers both practical insight and quiet reassurance. The legal profession is broad, complex, and often intimidating, but it is also full of opportunity, and rich with potential for meaningful work. You are not expected to know everything now, nor must you have it all figured out. This guide is here to help you ask the right questions, reflect on your own values and aspirations, and begin to chart a course that feels true to who you are.

As President, I feel incredibly fortunate to work alongside a team of students who care deeply about their peers. Our Careers portfolio, in particular, has poured time, energy and thought into curating this publication. Every page has been crafted with your future in mind. The contributors to this guide do not present themselves as infallible experts, they are students, graduates, and practitioners who have simply chosen to share what they've learnt along the way, in the hope that it might benefit others.

If I may offer one piece of personal advice, it is this: be open to where your legal education might take you. Some students come to law school with a clear vision of where they wish to end up; others feel entirely unsure. Both positions are completely normal. The truth is that your path may change, more than once. What matters is not sticking rigidly to a plan, but remaining curious, grounded, and true to your own values. Comparison is common in law school, but it rarely serves us. There is no single definition of success. Do not be afraid to forge your own way.

I would also encourage you to take time to care for yourself throughout the process. Law is a demanding degree, and the pressure surrounding careers can sometimes feel unrelenting. But no opportunity is worth pursuing at the cost of your wellbeing. If you find yourself in need of guidance, encouragement, or simply a space to feel heard, please know that the Society is here for you. We are not just a provider of events or resources as we are, first and foremost, a community. You belong here, and your future matters.

On behalf of the 2025 Committee, thank you for trusting us to walk alongside you during your studies. We are immensely proud of this guide, but prouder still of the students it seeks to support.

Wishing you strength, clarity and kindness in the year ahead.



**MARY CHARBEL KHATER**

2025 President - Notre Dame  
Sydney Law Society

# Shape the future with Allens



At Allens, we're focused on equipping our people with the skills and experience they need to be the lawyers of the future. We're ready to define tomorrow. **Are you?**

With us, **you'll be more than a lawyer**. Our people are technical experts, but they're also trusted business advisers who think bigger, more broadly and more strategically. Together, we solve complex legal challenges, and collaborate across practice areas and disciplines to guide our clients.

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**We work across borders too, thanks to our alliance with Linklaters.** This provides opportunities for our firm and our people, including annual rotations in Linklaters London, Hong Kong and Singapore being available to our graduate lawyers.

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An early legal career at Allens includes highly **tailored training** through the Allens Academy. Developed in partnership with the University of New South Wales, our Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice will help you transition from law graduate to legal expert and trusted business adviser.

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In a rapidly changing world, we seek opportunities to innovate by **embracing creative thinking**, new approaches and emerging technology. We don't just seek opportunities to benefit ourselves and our clients, we believe strongly in driving positive change to do right by our community too, as demonstrated through our strong pro bono practices.

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Our teams are **open, inclusive and encouraging**, giving you the opportunity to learn and grow while feeling supported. You'll have the flexibility to drive your own career, and we'll recognise your achievements and hard work as you progress through the firm. **Are you ready to begin?**

## Clerkship program

A clerkship at Allens is the first step in a rewarding legal career, and will give you invaluable insights into our work and culture. With support from a buddy and development supervisor, you'll work on real matters for real clients and be involved in a variety of projects. The programs:

- run from three to 10 weeks;
- are available at our Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney offices;
- feature ongoing support, including a buddy system; and
- include exposure to one or two practice groups.

## Graduate program

In each rotation, you'll gain a depth of experience that comes from seeing matters through to the end, and get exposure to stimulating legal challenges. At Allens, we don't work in silos, meaning you won't be limited to working with only one partner or by your practice areas. You'll work alongside a range of partners and lawyers, giving you exposure to a wide variety of tasks. Working with different teams and leading organisations, you'll grow a solid skills base and develop the agility needed to thrive in our ever-changing world. The programs include:

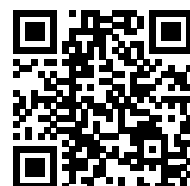
- two 12-month rotations in different practice areas;
- secondment opportunities in London or Asia, via our alliance with Linklaters, or with clients;
- ongoing supervision, coaching and mentoring;
- completing a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (via UNSW); and
- a 12-month weekly legal seminar series (Cornerstone Program).

Find out more at  
[graduates.allens.com.au](https://graduates.allens.com.au)



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**We're recruiting for a motivated graduate.  
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At Ashurst, we know that the brightest legal minds of tomorrow thrive in challenging situations and stay true to their unique selves. We want the whole you: your potential as a legal professional, and the combination of interests, ideas, beliefs and achievements that are part of what makes you, **uniquely you**.

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Embrace the opportunity to grow, innovate and make a difference. Come and join us at Ashurst to be part of something extraordinary.



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## Tips for success



### Make a great first impression

Consider your personal brand, how you want to be perceived and recognised in terms of your strengths. The best way to create a good impression is by being authentic.

A great attitude, enthusiasm for any task and the ability to quickly build rapport is an asset.

Remember, your clerkship is an extended interview for a graduate position.

### Show initiative and seek opportunities

Have a clear picture of what you want from your clerkship, what you want to learn about the firm, and the type of work you want to get involved in.

Take the initiative to get to know your team as well as other practices across the firm, meet as many people as possible and try to get involved in different types of work, projects and activities.

### Communication is vital

Take on various work for different people across the team, but don't forget the importance of managing your priorities.

Clerkships involve several training sessions and activities. You will also be completing various projects for people across your team; make sure you keep your team and supervisor updated on your workload and training schedules to ensure your success.

### Get feedback

A clerkship is an excellent opportunity for you to learn and develop your legal knowledge and skills, remember to request feedback after completing tasks, as acting on this feedback is a great way to demonstrate your ability to learn quickly – an essential skill for junior lawyers.

Take the time to follow up with the team members that have assigned you tasks and get their thoughts on the work you have completed - just be conscious of their workload and the timing.

### Develop your networks

Speak to as many people as possible. This is your opportunity to find out if Ashurst is the place you want to begin and grow your career.

Take every opportunity to meet people from across the firm to learn about the practice groups, and if they are people you would like to work with in the future.

Lastly, take the time to get to know your fellow clerks - you may be colleagues one day!



Find out more at  
[ashurst.com/students](https://www.ashurst.com/students)



As a global law firm with a rich history spanning over 200 years, we're renowned as a leading adviser in all areas of the law.



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## Q&A with Christiane Fahd

### From Notre Dame law student to lawyer to associate

Christiane is a member of the personal injury team at Carroll & O'Dea Lawyers. Since starting at Carroll & O'Dea Lawyers, Christiane has predominantly worked on claims against the State of New South Wales (particularly the Department of Communities and Justice) in relation to historical child abuse claims. Christiane also has experience in dealing with Workers compensation and public liability matters.

#### 1 What motivated you to pursue a career in law, and how did your time at Notre Dame influence that decision?

*"From a young age, I was drawn to the idea of justice and advocacy. I was motivated by the potential to make a meaningful impact in people's lives and to contribute to society by upholding the rule of law. My time at Notre Dame solidified this decision in many ways and the meaningful discussions with professors and peers helped me see the broader societal implications of legal work."*

*The university also offered numerous opportunities for practical experience, such as moot court competitions and internships, which allowed me to apply what I was learning in real-world settings. These experiences were invaluable in confirming my passion for law and in preparing me for the demands of the profession. Overall, the supportive academic community and practical experiences at Notre Dame played a crucial role in motivating me to pursue a career in law".*

#### 2 Can you share some of your most memorable experiences from law school and how did they shape your career path?

*"Reflecting on my law school journey, the mentorship I received from professors who were leaders in their fields was invaluable. Their guidance and insights helped me navigate my legal education and inspired me to continuously strive for excellence in my career. These relationships have continued to shape my professional path long after graduation".*

#### 3 What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in the legal profession, and how can students cultivate these while still at law school?

*"The ability to carefully interpret laws, facts, and precedents allows a lawyer to develop sound strategies and provide effective advice. Students can cultivate these skills by engaging deeply with their coursework, practising case analysis, and participating in moot courts or debates."*

*Ethical integrity and professionalism are the foundations of a reputable career. Upholding high standards in all dealings fosters trust and credibility. Notre Dame is a fantastic university where you are taught both practical and theoretical skills and this prepared me for the work that I now do at Carroll & O'Dea".*

#### 4 How have you continued to learn and grow professionally since you became a lawyer?

*"Since becoming a lawyer, I believe that continuous learning and professional growth are essential to staying effective and relevant in the field. I have made a conscious effort to stay updated on the latest legal developments by regularly reading legal journals, attending seminars and engaging in continuing legal education."*



## Q&A with Christiane Fahd

### From Notre Dame law student to lawyer to associate

*Additionally, I actively seek out mentorship and peer discussions to gain new perspectives and insights. Collaborating with colleagues on complex cases and sharing experiences has been invaluable for my growth. I also embrace new challenges, such as taking on pro bono cases outside my specialisation, which broadens my skills and understanding".*

#### 5 What impact has networking had on your career, and how can students effectively build their professional networks?

*"Building relationships with colleagues, mentors, and other legal professionals has opened doors to new opportunities, provided valuable advice and offered diverse perspectives that have enriched my professional development. Notre Dame offers a range of networking opportunities which you should take advantage of and, I would recommend you start networking early in your degree.*

*A strong professional network can provide ongoing support, guidance, and opportunities throughout your legal career, so investing time in building meaningful relationships early on is invaluable".*

#### 6 With the exam period fast approaching, what 3 essential study tips would you give law students?

**Exam periods can be a very stressful time. To make things easier, my tips would be as follows:**



*Create a Structured Study Schedule, consistent, planned study sessions help prevent last-minute cramming and ensure thorough preparation.*



*Although exams are usually open book, do not take this as a sign that you will be able to easily locate your information. Make sure your notes or books are separated or tabbed and label each section so that you can easily find where you need to go.*



*Pay attention in those last few classes of the semester, your lecturers may be giving helpful tips about what you can expect in the exams. As tempting as it can be to skip a class or two at the end of the semester to catch up on studying, those final classes are usually really helpful.*



**Christiane Fahd**

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**Phone:** 02 8226 7327





# Opportunity Starts Here

There's never been a better time to be part of G+T. Work at the forefront of profound changes in our society and economy with smart people who value your ideas and perspective, and be part of a network that's building Australia's best corporate firm.

Our clerkships in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney offer a unique chance to experience one or two practice areas in corporate law and learn from some of Australia's most talented lawyers.

In Sydney, we offer a summer clerkship with two 4-week rotations across two practice areas and the option to apply for the Aurora Internship, a fully funded 5- to 6-week winter internship.

## Is a G+T clerkship right for me?

The G+T clerkship experience is open to law students in their penultimate and final year of study. Our culture is driven by respect and inclusion, entrepreneurship, integrity and active citizenship. We share common values and celebrate the talents and goodwill of our people.

If you have the restless ambition to work at the heart of change, and if you are prepared to take the initiative, you'll feel like you belong here.

## What will I experience?

During your clerkship (depending on location), you'll be provided with a supervising partner, a mentor and a buddy who will help you develop your day to day legal and personal skills. You'll also grow with the help of structured training, covering drafting and technical skills through to how to create your personal brand.

You'll also have the chance to work on innovation and pro bono matters. This is your opportunity to explore areas you're interested in, push out of your comfort zone and bring your own ideas and perspective to the team. Plus, you'll build a valuable network that will support you throughout your career – wherever it takes you next.

## Can I apply for a graduate role?

G+T clerks typically receive priority offers for graduate roles, and we have a high conversion rate. However, graduating students are always welcome to apply to our 18-month graduate program. Look for graduate vacancies on our website.

## Clerkship application dates

Applications	Open	Close
Melbourne	7 July 2025	10 August 2025
Perth	23 June 2025	27 July 2025
Sydney	11 June 2025	13 July 2025

Learn more about our clerkship programs at

[www.gtlaw.com.au/careers](http://www.gtlaw.com.au/careers)

*I think graduates today are looking for the whole package – collaborating with the best people on interesting work, being stimulated in an inspiring office, being valued for their input. And I feel like I'm in the perfect place for that at G+T.*

Karla Jeffrey, Lawyer

## Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you.



**Kristie Barton**

Talent Attraction + Brand Manager  
+612 9263 4575  
KBarton@gtlaw.com.au



## Ben Copping

2024 Summer Clerk

I thought my clerkship experience was over before it began. A catastrophic printer malfunction meant I couldn't provide a printed copy of the academic transcript we were asked to bring along to Super Saturday. Instead, I had to desperately resort to sending a PDF copy to the recruitment team, in an attempt to show I could indeed be trusted to work at a major law firm.

Mercifully, this was Gilbert + Tobin ('G+T'), a firm that is far more concerned with what you bring to the table, not your ability to successfully work out what 'Error Message 4' means on a printer. Throughout the clerkship interview process, my now colleagues were more interested in getting to know my experiences, my interests, and what I would be able to contribute to the team. It was their friendliness and openness throughout very conversational interviews, Q&As and networking events that made my decision to pick G+T a no brainer. With G+T, what you see is what you get.

Once the clerkship began, I was able to meet 38 other people I can now all call friends, that I have grown alongside throughout the clerkship. We were all rather nervous on our first day, but we were very warmly welcomed in our teams and given a thorough induction to the firm.

Once we went off to our respective teams for our first rotation, we were able to meet our mentors who guided us through our new practice groups. In Disputes + Investigations, I was able to work on several matters, including regulatory investigations and contractual disputes. Despite being a Summer Clerk, I was given the opportunity to work on tasks that would ultimately inform litigation and investigation strategy, as well as be presented to clients. The matters in question were for prominent clients, and the quantum of disputes substantial; highlighting the ability of Summer Clerks to get their hands on some of the biggest matters in town. Beyond the office, we were able to sit in on court hearings and get to know our colleagues over lunches, coffees, and the famed 3pm snacks in the Level 32 kitchen.

My second rotation was into the world of Competition, Consumer + Market Regulation, an area of law I had no experience with to date. Despite my lack of experience, I was entrusted with tasks which genuinely contributed to matters, and confirmed my suspicion there really is no kind of learning like learning on the job. Under the mentorship of my Supervising Partner, Charles Coorey, I joined meetings with clients and opposing counsel, getting a genuine sense of what the work of a competition lawyer entails. The breadth of industries and clients I was able to engage with meant that each day provided new challenges and opportunities to learn – a perfect opportunity for growth.

Outside of working on matters, we also received countless chances to develop our skills and learn about other practice groups through seminars, presentations, and innovation projects. To finish off the clerkship, we also got our creative juices flowing by creating our very own 'Day in a Life' videos.

Most importantly, I was able to meet lawyers and fellow clerks I have been able to learn so much from. These are people I have no doubt I will continue to know both professionally and personally for years to come, no matter where our separate paths take us. Bonding at social events, clerk getaways, Christmas parties, cruises, and drinks, I have become close to so many new genuine and interesting people - an undeniable highlight of the clerkship process.

I am beyond grateful for my clerkship experience, and my time so far at G+T, and cannot wait to see where it will take me in the future.

*Despite my lack of experience, I was entrusted with tasks which genuinely contributed to matters, and confirmed my suspicion there really is no kind of learning like learning on the job.*

Ben Copping

# MEET RACHEL, 2024/2025 SUMMER CLERK



## RACHEL DUONG

### SEASONAL CLERK INTAKE: 2024/2025

**Area of rotation:** Mergers & Acquisitions (Public M&A) and Banking & Finance  
(Financial Markets & Regulations)

**University:** Macquarie University

**Degree:** Bachelor of Laws (Honours), Bachelor of Commerce (Finance)

#### What is your top tip for navigating the clerkship application process?

My top tip is to stay organised during the clerkship application process. Clerkship applications opened during my final exams, so I planned ahead and focused on my priorities each day. This allowed me to submit strong applications while excelling in my studies. With effective time management, balancing both was achievable.

#### What was the application and interview process like?

The application and interview process felt like they were designed to get to know you. The application questions let me highlight strengths, interests and achievements, leading to natural conversations during interviews. The process felt supportive as I was provided with helpful material before each round, so I could understand what to expect and learn more about the firm.

#### Why did you choose KWM for your clerkship?

I decided to clerk at KWM because of its people and culture. Everyone I spoke to from juniors to partners, shared a commitment to excellence and mastery of their craft. KWM's collaborative and high-performing culture aligned with my values, offering high-quality opportunities to learn and build a strong legal foundation.

#### What type of work did you complete during your clerkship?

I worked on advisory and transactional matters during my clerkship. During my Banking & Finance rotation, I assisted with proof-reading documents prepared by my team and ensured that cross-references were accurate. In my M&A rotation, I assisted with corporate governance work, preparing documents for deals and post-completion work.

#### How would you describe the KWM culture based on your clerkship experience?

KWM's culture is collaborative and high performing. Partners from different practice areas worked together on matters. For example, during my Banking & Finance rotation, I was invited to join a call between my supervising partner and an M&A partner to discuss a technical aspect of a document. KWM's training and events also showed its commitment to legal excellence.

#### How would you describe the social aspect of the clerkship?

The social aspect of the clerkship was a unique opportunity to bond with a cohort of clerks at the same stage of our careers. Starting a new job together made it easy to connect, and it was great to catch up in the mornings, during lunch and after work. We truly shared the clerkship experience together.

#### What kind of training did you receive? What opportunities for learning and growth were offered at KWM?

The induction at the start of the clerkship provided training on key skills for the role including writing a memo, research and how to use document management software. The opportunities for learning and growth were endless at KWM. We had access to CLEs and self-learning trainings, which focused on different areas for professional development.

#### What was your clerkship experience vs. your initial expectations?

My clerkship experience was one of the most valuable opportunities I have had in my career so far. My clerkship has helped me gain clarity on what I want to pursue and the areas of commercial law that I am interested in. The support I received from everyone at the firm exceeded my expectations and made my clerkship experience.

#### Do you have any advice to give prospective clerks?

My advice is to be committed to the clerkship process and enjoy the growth that comes with it. Reflecting on your skills, strengths and interests during the application process is incredibly valuable. Interviews are one of the most exciting parts, offering an opportunity to showcase yourself and learn about the industry's market leaders.



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# INSIDE KWM'S TAX TEAM

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



TESS O'CONNOR  
SOLICITOR  
Sydney

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**KWM lawyer Tess shares insights and experience on what it's like to work in KWM's Tax team.**

When people think of tax, they often imagine complex numbers and endless spreadsheets. But at King & Wood Mallesons (KWM), the world of taxation is far more dynamic and engaging. We're here to debunk common myths about tax and show you just how diverse and exciting a summer clerk or graduate rotation in tax at KWM can be.

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## DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES

Our tax practice at KWM is incredibly broad, offering juniors a rich variety of experiences.

### Experience advisory, litigation and transactional work

Working in the Tax Team provides an enormous breadth of different opportunities to get involved in advisory, litigation and transactional work. As a junior, you can gain experience in all three areas within one rotation!

**Advisory:** This involves working with corporate clients or high-net-worth individuals to navigate the complexities of tax law. This could involve anything from advising businesses on the taxes that may apply in relation to a transaction, to offering guidance on international tax matters, such as whether Australian or foreign taxes apply in a cross-border transaction. At KWM, we are often asked complex questions where there is no clear answer, and this requires statutory interpretation to work out the likely tax consequences. In this way, advisory work is very similar to answering a hypothetical problem question at university. Some examples of tasks that a junior may assist with include:

- undertaking interesting & complex legal research and preparing advice for clients. This task involves translating technical legal concepts into practical advice that our clients can rely upon.
- researching changes in the tax law, case law, and administrative guidance. Staying on top of the latest developments is crucial in tax, and your research will help inform clients of their compliance obligations.
- assisting with pro-bono matters. For example, many charities need to ensure they meet the requirements for donations they receive to be tax-deductible for donors.

**Litigation:** This involves representing clients in disputes with tax authorities. As a junior, you may be involved in assisting at each stage of a dispute – including the audit, litigation and settlement processes. Tax disputes often revolve around statutory interpretation, tax litigation teams tend to be smaller than corporate litigation teams, meaning juniors have more responsibility over a greater variety of work. Some of the tasks that a junior may assist with include:

- researching and preparing internal advice that assists the strategic approach of the case.
- attending court or conferences with experts.
- writing briefs to counsel and drafting affidavits, submissions or objections.
- responding to statutory notices and compiling evidence.

**Transactional:** This involves considering the tax aspects of major transactions, such as buying and selling companies or business assets, financing, and raising capital. Some of the tasks that a junior may assist with include:

- preparing first drafts of tax opinions (documents that assess the tax consequences and provide guidance on the potential risks and compliance issues associated with a particular course of action).
- reviewing contracts, such as sale agreements and banking documents.
- drafting tax related clauses.

### **Work across different practice areas on multidisciplinary projects**

Tax is not an isolated discipline. It intersects with other practice groups (such as Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A), Banking and Finance, Real Estate, Funds and Employment), enhancing the breadth of work and opportunities available when rotating through our team. This is because tax consequences often flow from the dealings that other practice groups advise on (for example, the tax outcomes from a business purchase on which the M&A team may be advising).

Accordingly, as a summer clerk or graduate, you'll have the opportunity to work alongside your peers in other teams, which allows you to build strong professional relationships and gain insights into different legal disciplines, enriching your overall experience at KWM. Additionally, this means that the skills you develop while in tax are highly transferable to other areas of law!

### **Myth-Busting: You Don't Need to Be a Math (or Accounting) Whiz!**

Two common misconceptions about working in tax are that:

- 1 you need to be a math genius.
- 2 you need to have experience in accounting or have studied tax at university.

Don't worry - this is definitely not the case!

Tax law isn't just accounting! Tax law requires understanding legislation, applying statutory interpretation principles, strategic thinking and problem solving. It's about applying legal principles to real-world scenarios – you won't be spending your day-to-day reviewing journal entries.

As a summer clerk and graduate, we don't expect you to have any prior knowledge. We provide training programs that will give you the expertise you need. The assets that will allow you to excel as a summer clerk or graduate in the Tax Team are an eye for detail and an enthusiasm and willingness to learn!



[careers.kwm.com/en/graduates-australia](https://careers.kwm.com/en/graduates-australia)

[kwm.com](https://kwm.com)

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金杜律师事务所

# MEET BAYLEY, 2024 LAW GRADUATE



## BAYLEY MATHAI

**Graduate Intake:** January 2024

**Areas of Rotation:** Rotation 1 - Leveraged Finance (Banking & Finance)  
Rotation 2 - Corporate and Financial Litigation (Dispute Resolution)  
Rotation 3 - Private Equity (Mergers & Acquisitions)

**University:** University of Wollongong

**Degree:** Bachelor of Economics & Finance / Bachelor of Laws

### Why did you choose KWM?

I chose KWM because of the work and the people. The nature of the work is fast-paced, complex, and engaging, and the people are friendly, welcoming, and talented! This combination makes KWM a great place to work where there's always new challenges and great people with whom to tackle them.

### What was your first six months like?

I learnt a lot in my first six months. In addition to graduate training, there was a high volume of interesting work to get involved in, which made work highly engaging. Going through the experience with a cohort was also great because we could exchange notes to help each other through and maintain a great social environment at the same time.

### What has been a highlight from a work perspective?

Working directly with clients is always a highlight from my perspective. There was one matter in my first rotation where I had a high degree of contact with the client for a few weeks through an intensive stage of the transaction. Through the team and the client getting along well, we were able to complete a demanding stage of the matter with relative ease, and achieved what was necessary in the tight timeframe we needed to, which I found rewarding and engaging.

### What skills do you consider important to succeed in your role as a graduate? Is this different to your initial expectations?

In my experience, the most important skills to develop as a graduate are time management, communication, and a willingness to engage with as much as possible. While this is not too dissimilar from my initial expectations, maintaining all these skills remains a balancing act that requires constant improvement!

### What is the culture like at KWM?

The culture at KWM is great. From a work perspective, everyone is friendly, welcoming, and engaged with their work. From a social perspective, there are monthly firm-wide events at the office, regular practice-group and team-specific events, and sports teams to get involved in. All of this makes for a great firm culture and coming to work much more enjoyable.

### How would you describe the social aspect of the graduate program?

One great aspect of the program is that almost all new graduates begin with several weeks of PLT work at the College of Law together. This creates a close social cohort moving into the office environment, which extends into the first week of induction and ongoing training. Having a large cohort also means that it's easy to organise social events together around work. All of this has set us up for a great social environment in which to start a career.

### What training did you receive on the graduate program? What opportunities for learning and development have you been offered at KWM?

The training in the graduate program is comprehensive. The first week of the program is exclusively training and induction on everything including the structure of the firm, its systems, and all the legal nitty-gritty we need to be across before starting in our roles. These learning and growth opportunities continue throughout our careers as all practice groups regularly deliver firm-wide training sessions.

### What were your expectations vs. your graduate experience?

The benefit of the KWM system is that it hires all (or almost all) of its graduates directly from its Clerkship Program. By the time you start as graduate, you've already had great insights into what the role might be like – a high degree of engagement with interesting work, lots of autonomy, and great people with whom to work.

### Who would you recommend KWM to?

I would recommend KWM to aspiring lawyers who have a passion for solving complex problems, challenging themselves, and constantly improving. If you want to work in a place with the ability to keep learning about a wide range of subject matter and work with great people, then KWM is for you.





# HERRO SOLICITORS

## Graduate Solicitor Program

### About the Firm

We are a boutique C.B.D. law firm and our practice areas are property law (with a strong focus on retail and commercial leasing), litigation, dispute resolution (in particular mediation) and commercial law.

We are considered one of the leading retail and commercial lease law firms in Australia.

Our Principal Solicitor, Anthony Herro, is Recognized in *The Best Lawyers in Australia*™ 2026 and 2025 for his work in Leasing Law. Additionally, the firm was recognized in the 2026 edition of Best Law Firms placing it among the top 2% of law firms in Australia.

Anthony is also ranked “*leading*” in the Doyle's Guide 2025, 2024 and 2023 in the category “*Leading Leasing Lawyers NSW*” and was ranked “*recommended*” in 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019.

### What is it like to work at Herro Solicitors?

- We are genuinely client focused.
- Whilst we provide legal advice of the highest professional standard, we do so in a friendly and genuine way.

- We provide ongoing training and mentoring – we want you to excel in your career.
- We try to make our workplace something special and personal. You are treated as an individual (not as a cost centre) and we try to nurture and encourage your professional and personal growth.
- To us, the practice of law involves helping people and making their lives better. We develop close relationships with our clients.
- You are exposed to client contact at an early stage.

### About You – Selection Criteria

We look for the following:

- Excellent character – honesty, integrity and sincerity are essential personal characteristics.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Solid academic record.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Genuine commitment to achieving exemplary outcomes for clients.

### How to apply

If this sounds like what you have been looking for, please forward your application to Mr Anthony Herro, Principal Solicitor, Herro Solicitors at [careers@herro.com.au](mailto:careers@herro.com.au) including the following:

- Covering letter addressing each of the Selection Criteria;
- Resume/CV including contact details for 3 referees; and
- Academic Transcript.

If you have any further questions, please visit [www.herro.com.au](http://www.herro.com.au) or telephone Mr Anthony Herro on 02 9247 0100.



# RESUME HACKS FOR SUCCESS

A well-written resume is essential for landing your dream job. However, crafting a resume can be overwhelming due to the abundance of opinions, trends, and practices, not all of which are beneficial.

This is where understanding the role of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) becomes essential. Employers often rely on ATS to simplify their hiring process by scanning and filtering resumes, assigning scores for comparison. To increase your chances of success, it is crucial to optimise your resume for ATS compatibility, ensuring you stand out and progress to the next stage of the hiring process.

The tricky part? ATS can be unpredictable, and if your resume isn't properly formatted, it might end up jumbled and unreadable on the other end. So, let's check out how you can make sure your resume clears the ATS scan and leaves a lasting impression on the hiring manager.

## HOW TO OPTIMISE YOUR RESUME FOR ATS

When it comes to optimising your resume for Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), It's important to avoid certain things that can trip up the system.

Here's a simplified checklist of what to steer clear of:

- Keep fonts simple and easy to read, avoiding fancy styles or colors that might confuse the system.
- Don't go overboard with graphics, tables, images, or charts. The system might get overwhelmed and miss important information.
- Skip headers, footers, or text boxes that can disrupt the scanning process. Stick to a clean and straightforward layout.
- Stick to common file formats like Word, as some ATS might struggle with unusual PDF versions.
- Don't stuff your resume with excessive keywords or irrelevant terms. Focus on relevant and impactful content.

- Avoid using invisible text tricks to add more keywords. The system is smarter than that!

By following these tips and presenting a well-structured resume, you'll ensure it's ATS-friendly and increase your chances of getting noticed by employers.

## THE HYBRID RESUME FORMAT

As a university student, you can leave a lasting impression with a hybrid resume format. This style captures employers' attention by highlighting your skills and achievements right from the start. It then presents a clear timeline of your work history. By using a hybrid resume, you effectively showcase your abilities and experience, making yourself stand out from other candidates.

## FIND THE TEMPLATE

You can find the hybrid resume template on the next page or visit CareerHub at <https://careerhub.nd.edu.au>. Search for "Hybrid Resume Template" in the resources section. It's a valuable tool to create your own impressive hybrid resume.

## INCORPORATE RELEVANT KEYWORDS

Remember to incorporate relevant job description keywords to make an impact on both employers and ATS. By following these guidelines, you'll position yourself as a standout candidate in the competitive job market.

## CONCLUSION

By taking the time to optimise your resume for ATS and use a hybrid resume format, you can greatly increase your chances of landing your dream job. So what are you waiting for? Start optimizing your resume today!



**SAMANTHA KHOURY**  
Careers Officer – University  
of Notre Dame Australia

# MASTERING THE ART OF WRITING COVER LETTERS

Ready to take your cover letter game to the next level and make a lasting impression on recruiters? Writing cover letters can feel daunting and tedious, but fear not! This article is here to shake things up and provide you with valuable insights. Get ready to highlight your skills, experiences, and true passion for the legal profession in a way that will truly captivate recruiters. Be sure to explore the helpful checklist tailored to help you craft exceptional cover letters.

Customising your cover letter for each job application is a must if you want to show dedication and genuine interest in the role and company. Take the time to thoroughly read the job description and highlight relevant skills and keywords. Include these in your cover letter. This shows the company that you've taken the time to understand their needs.

To make your cover letter more personal, include the company's address and the name of the contact person (if available). By addressing your letter directly, you demonstrate your research and genuine interest in the specific company and role.

Use your cover letter to highlight your measurable achievements. You could mention assignments and projects where you've showcased your research skills or give examples of extracurricular activities related to the legal profession. This will provide concrete evidence of your capabilities.

Conduct thorough research on the company's background, values, and recent achievements. Incorporate this knowledge into your cover letter to demonstrate that you have taken the time to understand the company and how you can contribute to its success.

Highlight specific aspects of the company that resonate with you and explain how your skills and experiences align with their goals. This helps employers envision how you can fit into their organisation and contribute positively.

A well-crafted cover letter should be concise, engaging, and focused. Keep it within one page, using clear and concise language. Use short paragraphs to highlight your key points. Your cover letter can read more conversational than your resume.

Conclude your cover letter by expressing your enthusiasm for the position and inviting the employer to contact you. Being proactive shows your eagerness to move forward in the application process.

## COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Customise each cover letter for every job application.
- ☐ Use relevant skills and keywords from the job description.
- ☐ Include company address and contact person's name.
- ☐ Clearly state your contact information, including your phone number and email address at the top of your letter.
- ☐ Begin with "To the Hiring Manager" or "To the Recruiter" if no contact was given.
- ☐ Highlight your measurable achievements e.g., demonstrating proficiency in legal research and writing through assignments and projects.
- ☐ Show genuine interest by researching the company.
- ☐ Match your skills, interests, or values with the company's.
- ☐ Avoid being negative or complaining about past employers.
- ☐ Keep the cover letter concise, engaging, and to the point.
- ☐ End with a clear request for the employer to contact you.



**SAMANTHA KHOURY**  
Careers Officer - University  
of Notre Dame Australia

# LINKED IN: YOUR KEY TO THRIVING IN THE LEGAL ARENA

Australia boasts a vibrant legal industry, with numerous law firms catering to a diverse range of legal services. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the legal services sector experienced steady growth, contributing over \$29.6 billion to the Australian economy in 2022-2023. This highlights the abundance of opportunities available for law graduates and professionals seeking to establish themselves in the Australian legal landscape, along with this comes an important reminder on the importance on effective networking when job searching.

Here are three transformative tips to maximize your LinkedIn presence and unleash your full potential in the dynamic Australian labour market.

## LINKED IN PROFILE

Your LinkedIn profile is your digital calling card, your chance to make a lasting impression on potential employers and the opportunity to showcase your proactiveness and professional brand. Showcasing your unique value proposition is essential. Start with a headline that conveys your area of expertise and passion for the law industry. Include a professional headshot that radiates confidence and approachability. And don't forget to optimize your profile with relevant keywords that resonate with employers and industry trends. Highlight your academic achievements, internships, and legal experience adding measurable results to create a comprehensive snapshot of your capabilities.

## BUILD A STRATEGIC NETWORK

Connect with fellow law undergraduates, professors, and alumni from your university and other universities to expand your circle. Join Australian law professional organisations and groups on LinkedIn,

where you can engage in discussions and get insights from seasoned professionals. Actively seek out connections with lawyers, legal recruiters, and industry leaders across Australia to foster valuable relationships. Building a strong network on LinkedIn opens doors to internships, mentorship opportunities, and invaluable career guidance.

## **SHOWCASE YOUR LEGAL EXPERTISE**

LinkedIn offers multiple avenues to demonstrate your legal knowledge and expertise. Publish articles or share insightful posts related to the Australian legal landscape. Comment on and share posts from legal thought leaders to engage in meaningful conversations. Participate in relevant LinkedIn group discussions, share valuable resources, and contribute thoughtfully. By actively showcasing your legal acumen, you establish yourself as a passionate and knowledgeable law undergraduate, attracting attention from potential employers and mentors.

Remember, LinkedIn is not just a passive platform; it is a dynamic space that can propel your legal career forward. With a powerful profile, a strategic network, and active engagement, you can leverage LinkedIn's vast potential to connect, learn, and position yourself for success in the competitive Australian legal arena.

**To book an appointment to meet with the university Careers Officers simply head to the Career Hub at: [careerhub.nd.edu.au](https://careerhub.nd.edu.au)**

**You can discuss course planning, job applications, interviews, networking and all things careers.**



**ADOLFO ZAMORA**  
Careers Officer - University  
of Notre Dame Australia

# MASTER THE INTERVIEW:

## QUICK TIPS TO IMPRESS THE HIRING MANAGER

Making it to the job interview stage means that the hiring manager was impressed by your application and wants to dig deeper to see if you'd make a good fit for the company and role. It's understandable if your excitement suddenly turns to nerves as you realise you now need to impress the hiring manager in person. Here are some quick tips to get you ready and impress your hiring manager.

- **Be a STAR and practice** – Be prepared to use specific examples when asked behavioural questions such as those starting with phrases like “tell me about a time when you,” “how do you handle,” or “give me an example of how you.” These questions can be answered using the STAR method: share a Situation, explain the Task, detail your Actions, and highlight the Results. Prepare multiple examples that you can draw on for various skills. Practice using this approach to nail your interview responses!
- **Do your research!** Know the latest trends and developments in your industry as well as the company's values, goals, and culture.
- **Show up on time** – Try not to waste your getting ready time doom scrolling. Organise your outfit and travel route ahead of time. Don't leave on time; leave early.
- **Dress to impress** – Not every workplace has a formal culture but aim to always dress professionally.
- **Mindfulness** - During your job interview, use mindfulness techniques to stay focused. If you feel nervous, breathe deeply. Try to focus and listen actively to the interviewer. Notice any negative thoughts, but don't dwell on them; instead, refocus on the present moment.

- **Charisma** - Let your passion for the job and company shine. Trust in your abilities and let them know what contribution you can make to the team and company.
- **Be a team player** – Hiring managers are looking to see if you'd support the team. Demonstrate your teamwork skills by using examples of times you've collaborated with others to achieve shared success.
- **Be positive in your responses** – Often, a lack of confidence may come across in the way we respond to questions, such as focusing on what we haven't experienced or stating our weaknesses or mistakes without following up on how we've grown. Highlight your skills, strengths, and growth mindset.
- **Curiosity won't kill you** - Show your interest in the company and the role by asking thoughtful questions. Be curious about opportunities for training or progression. Ask them about the team dynamics. Remember, you also want to decide if this job suits you.
- **Don't ghost them** - Send a thank-you email after the interview and restate your interest.

Remember, your confidence will shine through, and you will make a strong impression if you are prepared. Stay prepared with these tips to ensure you make a strong impression.



**SAMANTHA KHOURY**  
Careers Officer - University  
of Notre Dame Australia

# THE ART OF HANDLING REJECTION

So, you've spent countless hours slaving away over assessments and readings because you know that when you reach the end of your degree, it will land you the perfect role, right? Sometimes we don't anticipate that landing the desired role after graduating isn't something that happens immediately. It often takes time and involves multiple setbacks and rejections.

Rejection can happen at any stage of the job-seeking process, and many factors come into play—not all of which have to do with you. Understanding this will help you focus your attention and growth on areas you can control, rather than stressing about things outside your control.

## REASONS FOR REJECTION YOU CAN CONTROL

- You might face rejection in the initial phase when submitting your resume and cover letter. Employers often rely on software to simplify their hiring process. These Applicant Tracking Systems scan, filter and score hundreds of resumes and cover letters.
- Although the use of ATS can be convenient for the hiring manager, it can also become problematic for job-seekers. If you've applied to dozens of jobs with no response, your resume might not be ATS compatible. Optimising your resume for ATS compatibility might be your first step to success.
- There are changes you could make to your resume to ensure it successfully passes through the ATS. The most important rule is to keep your format simple. Avoid fancy font styles and colours.

- Stick to more traditional fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, Cambria, Garamond, Georgia, Palatino, Calibri, Helvetica, Tahoma or Verdana. Remove any graphics, tables, images, charts, headers, footers, or text boxes - these can disrupt the scanning process. Save your resume in Word format, as some ATS might struggle with PDF versions.
- Keywords are crucial and the job description is your cheat sheet. Check to see what criteria you haven't addressed on your resume, and include relevant skills. Unfortunately, ATS looks for exact words and doesn't recognise synonyms. So, if the job description asks for someone who is "proficient in Microsoft Suite," you may want to reword your resume if it reads "Strong in Word, Excel and PowerPoint."
- Similar to your resume, your cover letter could be holding you back. Did you know that you should customise your cover letter for every job application? Your cover letter should equally focus on the company as well as on yourself. Show genuine interest by researching the company and highlighting your measurable achievements, e.g., demonstrating proficiency in legal research and writing through assignments and projects. Demonstrate how your skills, interests, or values align with the company's and how you would make an excellent fit for the team and role. Keep the cover letter less than a page. It should be conversational but professional. End with a clear request for the employer to contact you. If you've made it to the interview stage but haven't been successful, it's important to put things into perspective and keep trying. You can increase your chance of success by practicing your interview skills and answering behavioural questions using the STAR response format. Your confidence will shine if you've done your research on the company and role and can demonstrate that you understand their values, needs and goals.

## **REASONS FOR REJECTION YOU CAN'T CONTROL**

- Sometimes you may have done everything right and you might be wondering what more could I have done? Rejection isn't always a reflection on your ability or skills. There are some reasons why rejection might not be in your control, and it is liberating to recognise this.

- Hiring managers take into consideration their company culture and will choose someone who came across as a good cultural fit. This does not mean that your skills and experience are lacking. The personal opinion of the hiring manager can often play a key role in selection.
- In some cases, an internal candidate has been recommended for the role, but it was a requirement to advertise the role before appointing someone to the position. In such a case, the candidate was already selected before you applied.
- A common reason for missing out on landing a job is the high level of competition in the industry. If there are hundreds of applicants competing for one position, you need to stand out or risk being lost in a sea of applicants.

## **BUILD RESILIENCE AND ADOPT A GROWTH MINDSET**

Seek feedback at every stage of your application. Have a Career Advisor look over your application documents and run a mock interview with you. If you've been unsuccessful in an interview, kindly ask the hiring manager to provide feedback for improvement. Use this valuable insight to help prepare for the next interview.

Networking is powerful for discovering job opportunities. You can start building your network at university. Create and optimise your LinkedIn profile and stay up to date with industry events and news. You can use your profile to connect with colleagues, mentors and professionals you've met through placements.

Rejection can be challenging but is an expected part of the job search process. It also provides an opportunity to build resilience and adopt a growth mindset.



**SAMANTHA KHOURY**  
Careers Officer - University  
of Notre Dame Australia

# GRADUATE JOBS VS GRADUATE PROGRAMS: WHAT UNDA STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

As you approach the final stretch of your law degree, you'll likely hear two terms thrown around a lot: graduate jobs and graduate programs. While they might sound similar, they offer very different experiences and knowing the difference could shape your early legal career (and help you plan that end of degree European vacation).

## Timing: When Can You Apply?

One of the biggest distinctions is when you're eligible to apply.

- **Graduate Programs:** These are structured programs that often accept students from multiple fields. Which often accept applications for up to a year before you graduate. That means if you're in your penultimate year, you can already start applying and potentially lock in a job before your final exams.
- **Graduate Jobs:** These are more traditional roles that typically require you to have already graduated. You might need to wait until you've completed your degree and Practical Legal Training (PLT) before applying.

**Why it matters:** A graduate program can give you peace of mind—and the freedom to plan that end of degree Euro trip, knowing your job is already lined up.

## Support and Development

- **Graduate Programs:** These are designed with learning in mind. You'll usually receive structured training, mentoring, and rotations across different practice areas. The program typically lasts 12–24 months, depending on the firm or government organisation.
- **Graduate Jobs:** While some organisations offer onboarding and initial training, ongoing support may taper off after the first 3–6 months. You're expected to hit the ground running and learn on the job.

**Why it matters:** If you thrive with guidance and want to explore different legal areas before settling, a graduate program might be the better fit.

## Career Trajectory and Culture

- Graduate Programs often come with a clear pathway to progression, including performance reviews, networking events, and exposure to senior lawyers. Sometimes there is also an opportunity to secure an on-going position with the organisation.
- Graduate Jobs can vary widely, some may offer similar growth, while others might be more transactional or short-term.

**Why it matters:** Think about your long-term goals. Do you want a structured launchpad or a more flexible, immediate start?

### Where to Find Opportunities

Ready to explore your options? Here are three excellent platforms where you can find both graduate jobs and graduate programs in law:

- **Career Hub** – UNDA's online job board.
- **UNDA Careers Guide** - A comprehensive list of open roles across Australia, including government and private sector opportunities.
- **Prospel Law & Business Career Directory** – Search for clerkships, graduate jobs, graduate programs and learn about top law firms.
- **Law Society of NSW** - Graduate Recruitment Program: Especially useful for students in NSW, this site outlines key dates and participating firms.

## Career Support

The Career and Employability team are here to support your transition from university to employment.

Book in an appointment with a registered Career Practitioner or a Peer Career Facilitator [here](#).

# CLERKSHIPS: WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW CAN YOU START ONE?

Clerkships are programs offered to penultimate and final year students. These programs allow students to gain experience in the legal profession and are a way for students to gain experience in the legal sector. Many law firms offer a formal summer clerkship program which may run anywhere between 8-12 weeks. Some clerkships allow students to rotate around different practice areas within the firm in order to provide a balanced and varied amount of experience.

While a permanent role is not guaranteed at the conclusion of a clerkship program, completing the program greatly enhances your chances of securing a graduate position. Whether or not you receive an offer of employment, the most valuable aspect of any clerkship is the opportunity to develop your legal skills, gain practical experience, and grow professionally.

## **As a Law Clerk you may be tasked with jobs such as:**

- Drafting legal documents
- Filing and document management
- Legal search
- Attending meetings with clients or other colleagues
- Generally assisting Lawyers with their everyday duties.

## **2025 Clerkship Recruitment Program Key Dates:**

**Wednesday, 11 June** – Applications for summer clerkships open at 9:00am

**Sunday, 6 and Sunday, 13 July** – Applications for summer clerkships close at 11:59pm

**Wednesday, 10 September** – Offers for summer clerkships can be made from 9:00am

**Thursday, 11 September** – Offers for summer clerkships must be accepted or declined by 1:00pm



**ALANA OXLEY**  
2025 Vice President - Notre  
Dame Sydney Law Society

# THE PATH TO BECOMING A LAWYER

Congratulations you have made it to law school, however this is just the first step in your journey to becoming a legal practitioner.

In Australia, the path to becoming a lawyer is structured and rigorous, and has been designed to ensure that all legal practitioners are well-equipped with both academic knowledge and practical skills.

Therefore, there is a series of essential steps which need to be fulfilled before you officially become a legal practitioner.

## **Complete an Accredited Legal Qualification:**

The first step to becoming a lawyer is obtaining a law degree from an accredited university. This can be attained through both undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies:

- **Bachelor of Laws (LLB):** Typically a 4-year undergraduate degree.
- **Juris Doctor (JD):** A 3-year postgraduate degree for students who have already completed an undergraduate qualification.

Additionally, most Australian universities including the University of Notre Dame also offer double degrees, such as Law and Arts or Law and Commerce, which will extend your length of study to 5 or more years.

All law degrees must be accredited by the admitting authority in the relevant state or territory and must include the Priestley 11 core subjects (such as contracts, torts, and criminal law).

Once you have completed your degree, this requirement is officially met and you can move onto Practical Legal Training!

## **Practical Legal Training (PLT):**

Once you have completed your law degree, you then must complete Practical Legal Training.

Practical Legal Training is a course which bridges the gap between academic study and legal practice. The course can take anywhere between 3 to 8 months to complete and focuses on developing practical, hands-on training in essential legal skills such as client interviewing, advocacy, legal writing, and professional ethics.

In Australia, Practical Legal Training must be provided by an approved external provider. The largest provider is the College of Law who have more than 50 years of experience in preparing graduates for professional legal practice.

## **Application for Admission:**

Once you have completed all the necessary academic and practical requirements, the final step in becoming a lawyer is applying for admission to practise.

In New South Wales, this involves satisfying the Legal Profession Admission Board and showing that you are a fit and proper person to practise law. In order to complete this, you are required to apply for a compliance certificate Legal Profession Admission Board where you will need to disclose any relevant information.

Once your application is approved by the Legal Profession Admission Board, you will need to attend an admission ceremony. For students located in Sydney, this is a formal event held at the Supreme Court of New South Wales. During the ceremony, you will take an oath of office or make an affirmation of office, and sign the Supreme Court Roll and your journey as a legal practitioner officially begins.

To learn more about being admitted as a lawyer you can visit:  
<https://lpab.nsw.gov.au/>



**ALANA OXLEY**  
2025 Vice President - Notre  
Dame Sydney Law Society

# THE PATH TO BECOMING A BARRISTER

Although the legal field is vast with a variety of roles, the majority of legal practitioners fall into one of two categories: solicitors or barristers.

Barristers set themselves apart from solicitors due to their work being self-employed, and mostly in advocacy. Therefore, their work primarily revolves around appearing in court and making oral or written submissions. Barristers also wear a unique professional uniform with a black gown or with a short curly wig. Often, it's the solicitor that will engage and communicate with a barrister, rather than the client contacting a barrister directly.

## **To become an accredited barrister in NSW you must complete a rigorous pathway completing the following steps:**

- You must obtain a legal qualification from a tertiary institute – i.e. a law degree.
- You must be admitted as a lawyer in an Australian jurisdiction.
- You must pass the Bar exam. The bar exam is administered by the NSW Bar Association and comprises two papers focusing on the rules of evidence and legal ethics.
- If you pass the Bar exam you are eligible to undertake the Bar Practise Course consisting of lectures, workshops and court practice sessions to develop a barrister's trial advocacy skills. From now on, participants are usually referred to as 'readers' and will continue to be called readers for their first year at the Bar.

- After readers have completed the Bar Practise Course, they are issued a conditional practising certificate as they commence their 'Reading Program'. During the Reading Program, readers will work for a year under the supervision of 1 or 2 tutors (a tutor must be a barrister with at least 7 years' experience). Each reader must organise to have their own tutors and it is advised that this is organised 6 to 12 months before you take the bar exam.
- After a year of reading, you can apply for an unconditional practising certificate to become a fully qualified barrister.

### **There are a few factors to think about if you are interested in becoming a barrister**

Barristers often practise in what are referred to as chambers. Chambers are a collection of offices in a building used by barristers. Each barrister must lease or purchase their own chamber and it will be up to you as a reader to find your own chambers.

It is also common for lawyers to 'go to the bar' after practising as a solicitor for a number of years. This provides you with more time to develop your legal skills and build a network of connections making it significantly easier to find work once you are practising independently.



**BEN ARNOLD**  
2025 Careers Assistant  
Director - Notre Dame  
Sydney Law Society

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY OUR UNDA ALUMNI



**OLIVIA PASSERINI**  
Bachelor of Law / Arts  
Class of 2024

## **A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF OLIVIA'S CAREER**

In 2019 I started as a paralegal working in Property & Development, and in 2022 I moved to an Insurance team, working on personal injury and casualty matters. In July 2024 I was admitted as a solicitor. I am currently practicing in Corporate & Dispute Resolution, specifically in both Restructuring & Insolvency and Wills and Estates.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR TOP TIPS FOR CURRENT LAW STUDENTS IN PREPARATION FOR A CAREER IN LAW?**

Never underestimate the power of good drafting skills and being able to navigate legal research databases! Use university as the time to refine both of these skills, whether that be in your assignments or through participating in competitions. Think of drafting and research like muscles - the more you use them - the better they will be. You'll be surprised at how valuable both of these skills will be for a career in law (no matter the area!).

## **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

It's important to be curious and open to all areas of law - you never know who you'll meet, and where you'll end up! Don't close yourself off too early in your career as you never know where you could flourish.

## YOU WERE THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF NDSLS IN 2023, HOW DID YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN NDSLS PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR CAREER?

I loved my time as President of the NSDLS - it taught me so much about teamwork, collaboration and how to effectively work with others. My time on the NDSLS in its entirety, not just as President, enhanced my organisational and communication skills, time management and interpersonal skills. It was also a wonderful way to meet so many people at similar points in their career, which have proved to be valuable connections further down the track.

## IF READERS WANT TO LEARN MORE, WHERE CAN THEY REACH OUT TO YOU?

I'm always happy to chat over a coffee! If anyone would like to reach me, my LinkedIn is: <https://au.linkedin.com/in/olivia-passerini-b03253261>



# ADVICE FROM A FIFTH YEAR STUDENT

## #1 Build Friendships

I could not emphasise this enough. We go into law school with a competitive mindset, thinking we have to be the top student (spoiler: that mindset won't get you very far). The truth is, we are all in this together and law school can start to feel very isolating when you don't have a safe network of students who are in the same boat as you. It is incredibly comforting to share concerns regarding your readings, work-life balance, exams, and hear someone say, "I feel the same way". Law school at times could be very overwhelming, and your mental well-being is crucial, hence it is important to discuss anything with no other than people going through the same thing! Not only that, but in a few years, you may be working alongside one of your peers, kind of awkward if you have left a nasty impression (yikes). Connect with your fellow peers outside of university and build friendships to make university life a little more bearable, what is that saying again? oh that's right, 'Shared joy is double joy, shared sorrow is half a sorrow'.

## #2 Perfect Your Study and Research Skills

Ask yourself this- how are my research skills? This is the year you should be aiming to perfect your research skills, study techniques, and correct application of legislation. Understand how to find the right cases, structure your notes, and review efficiently is a game-changer and saves so much time later. Our library page has sooo many useful links and resources to help us and make as much use of it while you can! Review the AGLC 4 rules and keep reviewing it until you are confident you have got it down to a T. Practice makes perfect : )

### **#3 Network, Network, Network!**

Still have not made a LinkedIn profile? Well now is the time. Review and update your resume with any extra curriculars, reliable references and upload it onto your LinkedIn profile. This will make it easy for employers to find the right candidate when actively hiring for their firm. LinkedIn is a great way to be on the look out for current job opportunities, expanding your legal network, building a professional reputation, and actively engaging in discussions and posts within the legal network. Attend university events such as annual law balls, careers expo, law society meet and greets, and information sessions. Turn on your email notifications and follow the NDLS social media pages to keep up to date with any upcoming events.

### **# 4 Get Involved**

A great way is volunteering at legal centres, engaging in universities mooting competitions, summer clerkships and internships. Volunteering at legal centres provides real-world experience, exposes you to diverse clients, and helps build empathy and practical skills. Mooting competitions sharpen your advocacy, legal reasoning, and public speaking skills which are qualities a good lawyer has. Engaging with the legal and wider community, whether through student societies or pro bono initiatives, helps you grow personally and professionally. This does not only boost your resume, but it also builds your confidence, broadens your perspective, and allows for your practical skills to come into play. Yes- attending your lectures and reading the textbooks are important, but a good lawyer goes beyond that. Grab every opportunity that comes your way and take every chance you get involved to build a meaningful experience.

## # 5 Have Fun!

Don't be too hard on yourself- we've all been there, receiving a mark we weren't happy with and thought the world would end. Truth is, one bad grade does not define your future prospects and potential. Mistakes are apart of any journey and real growth comes with setbacks. Celebrate the little wins and laugh off the rough days, remember a bad day is only 24 hours. You are allowed to enjoy your time throughout your studies, have a positive outlook and keep going. Received a mark you aren't happy with? Got a great mark? Behind on one too many lectures? Whatever the situation is, be optimistic and keep moving forward- Life's a climb, but the view is great! Whenever I need to cheer myself up or celebrate a little win, here are some things I do; Go for a long run, watch a comfort movie, grab dessert with friends, journal, pray, have a longer than usual gym session- anything that makes me.



### **SHAIMA ZANGANA**

2025 Fifth Year Representative  
- Notre Dame Sydney Law  
Society

# ADVICE FOR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS FROM A FIRST YEAR

Studying law is a journey, from the first day, I was confronted by the seriousness of law and the expectation that comes with it. I believe making friends and having a support system around you will push you to enjoy the degree.

Facilities such as the library rooms and quiet study spaces allowed me to adequately prepare for my exams as well as being able to connect with peers that were facing similar challenges.

Being surrounded by an environment that is calm and helpful just before our first university exams really helped me focus after the pressure of HSC. At times the uni experience will become tiring and overwhelming, days you will experience lack of motivation and energy but it's important to stay grounded to the journey and flow of the degree.

Understanding that not every topic will be interesting to you but anchoring yourself to a reasoning that ignites your motivation for studying law will find itself beneficial to you.

More importantly, trusting God and inserting his presence into my journey at Notre Dame has been my favourite feature. I feel supported knowing that there is a place for me to go when I feel stressed or happy, the church.

From the completion of my first semester at Notre Dame, I would highly recommend attending necessary classes and involving yourself in events and sport that will help you ground yourself to the nature of Notre Dame. Taking time out to understand your place at the university as well as opening up to new experiences.

At first university seemed scary and unfamiliar but once you get the hang of it and build a routine, you'll soon see your days rolling out smoothly! I loved my first semester of uni, so many new experiences and so many new faces with like minds.

So what I'll leave you with walk into this journey with an open mind, be open to every challenge and experience and don't be too hard on yourself, you're only human.



**KATELYN MINACHI**

2025 First Year Representative  
– Notre Dame Sydney Law  
Society

# ADVANTAGES OF JOINING COMPETITIONS

Each year, the Notre Dame Sydney Law Society (NDSLS) Competitions team provide students with unique opportunities to improve their legal skills and gain practical experience through a variety of legal competitions. These are designed to mimic real world scenarios.

Whether you are someone interested in negotiations, advocacy or client communication skills, these competitions provide students with a supportive and educative environment to grow and develop their interests and abilities in such areas.

## **Some of the most popular competitions that the NDSLS run includes:**

### **Mooting**

Mooting competitions simulate that of appellate court proceedings whereby participants argue on a fictional legal issue. It involves both written and oral submissions, allowing for judgement based on concise writing, persuasive speaking, courtroom etiquette and confidence.

### **Client Interviews**

In client interviews, students assume the role of a solicitor during an initial consultation with their client. The client presents a legal issue and then it is up to the student, acting as solicitor, to identify the legal problem, ask questions, and offer advice.

### **Negotiations**

A negotiations competition comprises of two teams representing an opposing client, with the aim of reaching a mutually agreeable outcome, with the assistance of a judge. This problem-solving competition allows for students to develop their advocacy skills, professionalism and ability to compromise.

## Why You Should Get Involved

Aside from the rewarding experiences that competitions offer, competitors can also gain valuable skills and knowledge to enhance their legal abilities.

### Career Advantages

Participation in legal competitions bolsters one's resume. It demonstrates a student's commitment to personal development, initiative and practical legal exposure. This is also a great mention to employers in interviews and networking opportunities.

### Skill Development

Competitions at Notre Dame provide students with the opportunities to enhance their skills and develop in areas of legal writing, oral advocacy, teamwork and analytical thinking.

### Networking

Participation in competitions provide opportunities for students to form professional connections with like-minded individuals. This allows for students to build confidence and foster stronger legal connections.

### Professional Standards

Competitions are facilitated in professional environments. Whilst they are educational and enjoyable, this setting expects students to present themselves in a prepared and ethical manner.

### Why You Should Participate

Participation in competitions provides many benefits to students. Although often associated with career development, competitions also provide students with the ability to sharpen their skills, and grow personally, academically and professionally.



## **Some transferrable skills that participants cultivate includes:**

- Oral Advocacy
- Time Management
- Teamwork
- Written Communication
- Professionalism

## **Feedback**

As part of the competition process, competitors receive constructive feedback from judges. This type of feedback consists of strengths as well as weaknesses in area that the competitor can hone and develop. This level of feedback is invaluable and can also help form professional connections in the legal space.

## **Final Thoughts**

Law school competitions at Notre Dame open students to an array of possibilities. We welcome and encourage all students with varying experience and backgrounds to participate in all competitions. We aim to offer students a welcoming competitions environment, giving them unique opportunities to apply their knowledge in a practical setting.

We hope to see you all in our competitions this year!



**KIARA BEARD**  
2025 Competitions Director-  
Notre Dame Sydney Law  
Society

# SOCIAL JUSTICE: HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

## **PROMOTING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION:**

The NDSLS Social Justice portfolio consists of Diana Raheem, Social Justice Director, and Andrea Nouris, Social Justice Assistant Director. The portfolio's mission is to foster diversity, inclusion, and a sense of fulfillment for the law school, its students, and our wider community through yearly social justice initiatives. This year, the social justice team will be organising two major events for students to attend aimed at raising awareness about current and pressing social justice issues.

### **Winter Sleepout Event**

For the second semester, the social justice team is actively planning the annual Winter Sleepout event which will be officially announced soon! All important details will be announced in posts. The purpose of the Winter Sleepout is to raise awareness about homelessness and foster empathy and understanding within our community. On the night of the event, there will be refreshments, activities, and an opportunity to connect with your peers in a meaningful way.

### **Social Justice Advocacy Panel**

Also planned for semester two, the social justice advocacy panel will feature a small range of external organisations centred around different social justice issues. Speakers from each organisation will provide thought-provoking topics, valuable insights, and spark meaningful discussion amongst attendees on topical concerns within the broader community. This will be a wonderful opportunity for students looking to network with peers and external organisations, understand the role of advocacy, and provide insight into alternate ways to use your legal education beyond corporate jobs.

### **Additional Events**

This year, the Social Justice portfolio also engaged with Women and Girls' Emergency Centre (WAGEC) for their annual 'Walk for WAGEC'. Held in May, the event was centered around raising funds and awareness for domestic violence impacting women and children in Australia. Notre Dame's team was able to raise and donate \$2,648 to WAGEC. It was a powerful event highlighting a topical social justice issue within our country.

### **The Impact of Social Justice Events**

Through participating in social justice events, students have the ability to develop empathy, critical thinking skills, and sensitivity to societal issues, all of which is vital to a prosperous and meaningful legal career. This also broadens students' academic potential and opens up opportunities for students to develop professionally in a meaningful and impactful way. From this, students have ample opportunity to connect with industry professionals, build their resume and experiences in an informal and interesting way, as well as prepare themselves for their future careers. Finally, a sense of empowerment and purpose is brought about for students through this engagement which contributes to their overall experience at university.

### **Centering Social Justice in Your Degree or Career**

Centering social justice into your academic or professional life does not have to be challenging or demanding and has numerous benefits. Choosing a career which aligns with social justice provides meaning and purpose. It can also allow you to experience working in diverse settings and contributing to global issues.

Ultimately, centering social justice in your work ensures your contributions positively impact society. Before you are a lawyer, you are a human, and being able to understand people from all walks of life and the wider community in an empathetic way is paramount in having a rewarding career. The ways you can center social justice within your law degree are endless!

## **Law Electives**

At Notre Dame, you can choose law electives that align with social justice issues that interest you. These can include Contemporary Legal Issues, Mental Health Law, Employment Law, Family Law, and Law and War. These electives may connect to social justice by enhancing your knowledge of how the law operates within these fields and what human rights and inequalities may exist for people affected.

## **Double Degree in the Arts?**

Another way to center law would be to consider a Bachelor of Laws/ Bachelor of Arts double degree - only adding an extra year to the duration of your degree - with so many options that may include social justice. The most obvious is majoring in social justice, however, other options include sociology, politics, and international relations. An arts degree majoring in these options can open your eyes to social justice issues that you may not be aware exist and give you specialised knowledge and experience in them in the form of research assignments and internships within the field.

## **Volunteering**

Finally, Volunteering with the community for social causes you are passionate about is another avenue to center social justice within your degree. Volunteering allows you to increase your understanding of needs within the community and the ability to make a positive impact. This enables you to connect with like-minded people who are passionate about social justice. Your chosen volunteer role may also give you experience or insight as to what your future career may be and how it can involve social justice. It can enhance your ability to understand social justice issues by actually engaging with them.

## **Volunteering opportunities include:**

- St Vincent De Paul Society
- Caritas Australia
- RELEDEV Dream Project - refugee mentoring program
- Community legal centres and;
- LegalAID.

## **INCORPORATING SOCIAL JUSTICE WITHIN YOUR LEGAL CAREER:**

If a corporate legal career doesn't seem appealing to you, consider working within social justice.

### **Advocacy**

Individual advocacy enables you to help vulnerable people understand their legal rights, giving them advice and representing them in legal settings.

Systemic advocacy involves working to influence change in policy and legislation that affects vulnerable populations by investigating issues and creating alternative solutions.

### **In House Council**

You can work as an in-house legal adviser for not-for-profit or non-government organisations, allowing you to work directly within the social justice sector as a legal professional.

### **Policy/Law Reform**

You can also go into policy work using your analytical skills to conduct research into social justice issues using the skills you learn in law school such as legal research and writing. This allows you to enact change on a policy level through law reform.

### **Community Legal Centres**

These allow you to provide free legal services for vulnerable populations and promote human rights by advocating for equitable access to justice.

### **Pro Bono**

Finally, working Pro bono would allow you to provide free legal aid to those who require it, enacting the very definition of the term being for the public good.

The NDSLS Social Justice portfolio remains committed to advocating for social justice and creating a more inclusive community. Join us in our efforts to make a positive impact. We strive to connect students within the Notre Dame community who are passionate about social Justice and by getting involved you will have an avenue for putting your core social justice values into action.

If you have any particular social justice causes that you are passionate about or have any suggestions for initiatives or events that you would be interested in please contact us at [SocialJustice@ndsls.org](mailto:SocialJustice@ndsls.org) and [socialjusticeassistant@ndsls.org](mailto:socialjusticeassistant@ndsls.org)



**DIANA RAHEEM**

2025 Social Justice Director -  
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2025 Social Justice Assistant  
Director- Notre Dame Sydney  
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# THANK YOU

As you navigate your journey through law school and into the legal profession, we hope this guide has served as a valuable resource offering practical advice whether it be understanding clerkships and graduate programs to refining your resume and preparing for interviews.

One of the most powerful tools in your career journey is your network. Whether it's through university events, LinkedIn, clerkships, or simply connecting with peers and alumni, building relationships within the legal community can open doors you never expected. Networking is more than a professional asset, it is also a source of support, collaboration, and inspiration. The people you meet along the way may one day become your mentors, colleagues, or even lifelong friends.

We would like to extend our deepest thanks to the students, alumni, staff, and sponsors who contributed their knowledge and experiences. Your generosity in sharing your journeys makes this guide an invaluable tool for the next generation of legal professionals.

To all Notre Dame law students, whether you are in your first year or approaching graduation, remember that there is no single path to success. Stay curious, be kind to yourself, and lean on your community. The Notre Dame Sydney Law Society is here to support you every step of the way.

On behalf of the 2025 NDSLS Committee, thank you for allowing us to walk alongside you. We are proud of you, and we look forward to seeing the incredible contributions you will make to the legal world.



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2025 Careers Director - Notre  
Dame Sydney Law Society



**BEN ARNOLD**

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