



Western Sydney
LAW STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

2023

CLERKSHIP GUIDE



WESTERN SYDNEY LAW STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Western Sydney Law Students' Association (WSLSA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge that this was and always will be Aboriginal Land. We respect the knowledge that traditional elders and Aboriginal people hold and pass on from generation to generation, and acknowledge the continuous fight for constitutional reform and treaty recognition to this day.

The issue of the 2023 WSLSA of the Clerkship Guide builds on the fantastic work of the volunteers who contributed their time and effort in previous editions of this publication. We would like to thank our sponsors for their support and in particular the Western Sydney University law clerks for sharing their experiences and the talent/HR representatives for reaching out to our students. We would also like to thank the Western Sydney University School of Law for their support and guidance.

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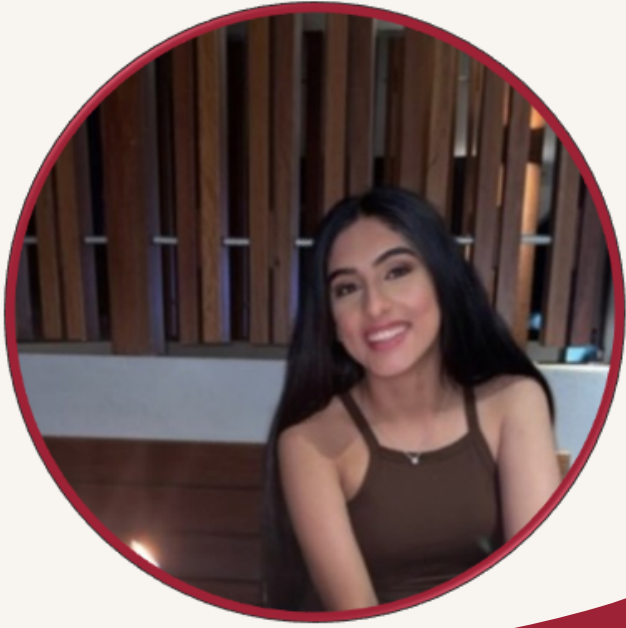
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PRESIDENTS' WELCOME



Shagan Kaur-Ghuman -
President

On behalf of the Western Sydney Law Students' Association, I am pleased to present to you the 2023 Clerkship Guide! I would like to extend my gratitude to all of you who attended the WSLSA Clerkship Evening. It was a fantastic event that provided an opportunity for networking and hearing diverse experiences from clerks.

This Clerkship Guide has been meticulously prepared by the dedicated WSLSA team to offer valuable insights and advice to assist you in your clerkship applications this season. We have put in significant effort to ensure that this guide is beneficial to you. Inside, you will find useful tips on enhancing the quality of your cover letter and CV, which will help you stand out among other applicants. During the clerkship recruitment process, it is crucial to be confident and effectively showcase your unique skills.

Embarking on a clerkship is an exciting way to kickstart your legal career, as it provides invaluable opportunities to work in various practice areas. We understand that the clerkship process can be highly competitive, but I strongly encourage all of you who are interested to apply. Rest assured, we recognise that this can be a stressful period, so remember to prioritise self-care during this time.

On behalf of myself and the WSLSA, I extend my best wishes to each and every one of you as you navigate through the clerkship application process. Your dedication and commitment to pursuing a legal career are truly commendable.

Additionally, I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our 2023 sponsors for their unwavering support and hard work throughout the year so far. Their contribution has been instrumental in the success of our association, and we are grateful for their continued partnership.

We hope that the 2023 Clerkship Guide, may serve as a valuable resource in your pursuit of clerkship opportunities. Best of luck to all of you !

EDITORS NOTES



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Clerkship is such an important opportunity for law students and it is an exciting time of the year where students are placed in the driving seat as to their futures. Students are able to take on the opportunity and become immersed in the legal field and take on the various hurdles to reach their career goals. As I am a third-year student I am always eager to understand what more can we as an association can do for our cohort and what are they needing from our WSLSA. We have ensured that our clerkship guide can provide our students with tips and tricks and advice from previous WSU summer clerks, to ensure that students can put their best foot forward.

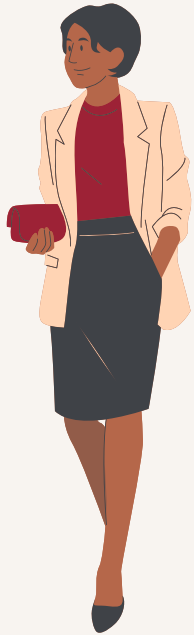
To ensure that we are also having opportunities for law students the WSLSA has become more proactive in having events, discussions and open dialogue online and on Zoom throughout 2023. This has resulted in a number of students becoming more aware of the legal environment as well as the many opportunities students have in commercial law firms.

We wish the best of luck to all students who are applying to the clerkships this year. Our guide includes various details on the recruitment process, along with practical tips and tricks for a successful application. Moreover, we have included testimonials from WSU alumni who have participated in clerkships, offering firsthand experiences to inspire and guide you in your own journey.

01 INTRODUCTION TO CLERKSHIPS



1.1 WHAT IS A CLERKSHIP



Law students have numerous opportunities to gain practical experience in their preferred legal field while studying for their law degree. Clerkships offer an invaluable chance for students to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-world scenarios. These programs enable students to understand the inner workings of law firms, explore different practice areas, and develop both personal and professional skills.

Typically, clerkship programs involve students rotating through 2-3 practice areas of a firm. Mid and top-tier firms primarily utilize clerkships as their main method for graduate recruitment. By participating in a clerkship, students gain exposure to the legal field, which greatly benefits their future legal career and establishes a strong professional foundation.



Most clerkships are offered during the summer, although some firms may also offer winter clerkships. It is common for law students in their penultimate and final years to begin applying for clerkships as it demonstrates proactiveness and a genuine interest in the law or a specific firm, thereby increasing the chances of securing a position.

Clerkships provide students with a structured training program, allowing them to work with various partners and experience different legal practice groups within a commercial law firm. Firms invest significantly in summer clerkships to ensure they provide comprehensive training and mentoring programs, maximizing the students' learning and development.



While a graduate position is not guaranteed, firms often hire graduates from the summer clerkship cohort based on their business needs. Whether or not a student receives a graduate position, the 6-10 weeks of coaching and mentoring during the clerkship provide valuable experience that can be leveraged for other opportunities in the legal industry.

Eligibility



To apply for a clerkship, you must be in either your second-last (penultimate) year or your final year of study. If you are pursuing a double degree, this would typically be your fourth year. For those undertaking a graduate LLB program, it would be your second year. Penultimate-year students are expected to complete their studies in 2024. While most firms consider applications from final-year students, it is important to verify the specific eligibility criteria of each firm to ensure compliance.

Why should I apply?

During a clerkship, you will embark on a structured training program that offers exposure to various practice groups and disciplines within a leading commercial law firm in Australia. This opportunity allows you to be mentored under the tutelage of different partners and benefit from their expertise. Firms allocate significant resources to ensure that the summer clerkship provides a well-organised training and mentoring program, aimed at maximizing your learning and professional growth.

While securing a graduate position is not guaranteed, firms typically hire graduates from the summer clerkship cohort based on their business requirements. Even if you do not receive a graduate position or discover that commercial law is not your preferred area, you will still benefit from 6-10 weeks of invaluable coaching and mentoring. This experience can be leveraged to pursue alternative opportunities within the legal industry.



1.2 WHAT FIRMS LOOK FOR



Strong Academic Transcript

Your academic transcript encompasses all the law subjects you have successfully completed. An academic transcript takes into account the entirety of your coursework. If there are instances of a failing grade, it is crucial to provide a clear explanation to firms, allowing them to understand the circumstances that contributed to the outcome during that specific semester. Additionally, your academic records should feature your GPA, which provides firms with a comprehensive overview of your progress from your first year to your penultimate year of study. Generally speaking, firms look for a GPA of 5.5 or above. But this is not a strict rule.

Work Experience

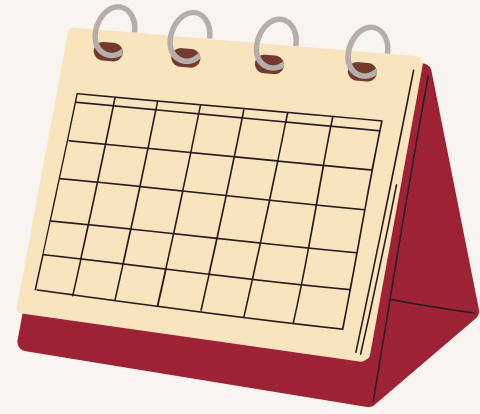
It is important to include in your application all relevant work experience. Relevant work experience includes not only legal experience but also any other work experience, including retail. Your work experiences may include volunteering at community legal centres, which are often in need of dedicated volunteers.

In your application, be sure to provide a comprehensive explanation of the strengths and skills you gained from your work experiences. Highlight how these experiences have equipped you with valuable attributes that align with what law firms seek in a clerk. Emphasise the transferable skills you have developed, such as effective communication, attention to detail, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, and demonstrate how these skills relate to the qualities and abilities that law firms value in their clerks.

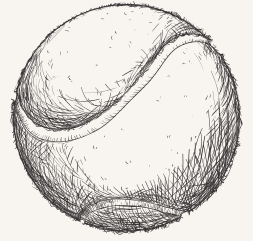
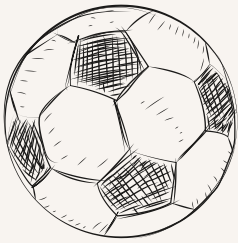




1.3 KEY DATES



Date	Clerkship Recruitment Information
Monday 5th June	Applications for Summer Clerkships Open
Sunday 2 and 9 July	Applications for Summer Clerkships close
Wednesday 13 September	Offers for Summer Clerkships Can Be Made
Thursday 14th September	Offers for Summer Clerkships Must be Accepted or Declined by 5pm



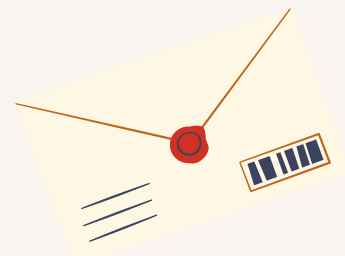
Extra-curricular activities

Including your extra-curricular activities in your application is beneficial as it provides firms with insights into your personality. This can encompass a range of activities, including sporting engagements, which can be leveraged to showcase the transferrable skills you have acquired through these pursuits.

By highlighting your participation in various activities, you demonstrate that you are an individual who possesses a well-rounded skill set and is capable of taking on diverse challenges. Firms can interpret your involvement in extra-curricular endeavours as evidence of your ability to adapt, collaborate, and excel in different contexts.

Drawing connections between your extra-curricular engagements and the skills relevant to the legal profession can further strengthen your application. For instance, team sports may have enhanced your teamwork and leadership abilities, while debate clubs may have honed your persuasive and analytical skills.

Cover-letter with the reasons you are applying to the firm



A cover letter plays a vital role in expressing your motivations for applying to a specific firm and showcasing how your skills align with the clerkship role. It should be personalised for each firm and highlight the firm's distinctive features that attract you. Keeping the letter concise while providing enough detail to capture the firm's interest is crucial.

In your cover letter, explain why you are specifically interested in the firm, touching upon its practice areas, notable cases, culture, values, or reputation. Demonstrate your knowledge of the firm to showcase your genuine interest. Also, illustrate how your skills and past experiences directly relate to the clerkship by providing specific examples of achievements and responsibilities from previous work experiences or volunteering roles. By tailoring your letter and showcasing your value, you increase the chances of being invited for further interviews and leave the firm intrigued to learn more about you.

1.4 PARTICIPATING FIRMS

Sydney Clerkship Applications Close

White and Case	Sunday July 9th 2023
Clayton Utz	Sunday July 9th 2023
Gilbert + Tobin	Sunday July 9th 2023
MinterEllison	Monday July 10th 2023
Clyde & Co	Sunday July 9th 2023
Herbert Smith Freehills	Sunday July 9th 2023



02 ONLINE APPLICATIONS



2.1 HOW TO WRITE AN APPLICATION

How to establish your brand

Clerkships provide law students with invaluable opportunities to apply their theoretical knowledge within their preferred commercial legal practice. These programs allow students to gain a comprehensive understanding of a firm's operations, explore various practice areas, and develop essential personal and professional skills.

Typically, a firm's clerkship programs offer the chance to rotate through 2-3 practice areas. They are primarily offered by mid and top-tier firms and serve as the primary method of graduate recruitment. Engaging in a clerkship exposes students to the legal field, granting them significant advantages for their future legal careers and establishing a strong professional foundation early on.

Most clerkships are offered during the summer, although some firms may provide winter clerkships as well. Law students, especially those in their penultimate and final years, often begin applying for clerkships during this time. Doing so showcases their proactive attitude and genuine interest in the law and specific firms, enabling them to make valuable connections and pave the way for future career opportunities.

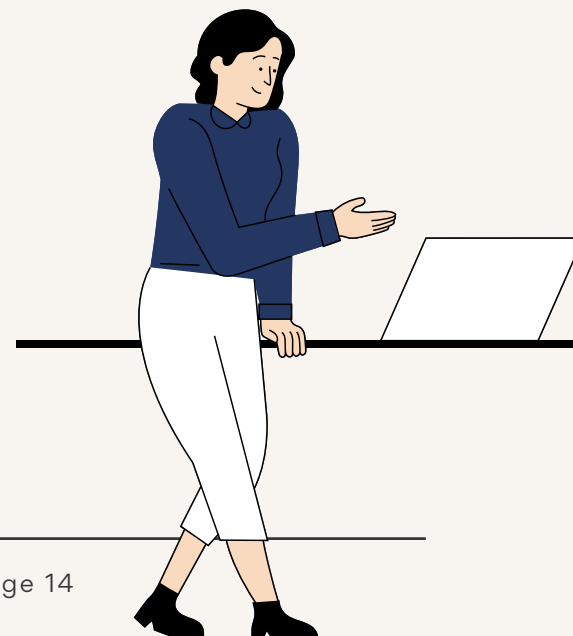
Is LinkedIn useful?

LinkedIn is really useful in looking at the firms points in certain topics. You are also able to take the opportunity to build a platform so when potentially firms are researching they are able to also see your experiences and what you have accomplished. LinkedIn is also a great platform to connect with solicitors and individuals who work at those firms to also consider their experiences in the firms.

Work experience

There are various ways to your experience using the STAR Technique which can be used to be concise and informative when explaining your skills

- Situation (your job/course at the time)
- Tasks (what was completed in your experience)
- Actions (how did you do it)
- Results (what happened after completing specific tasks)



2.1 HOW TO WRITE AN APPLICATION

Academics

Achievements and certificates

How to calculate your WAM

Your Weighted Average Mark (WAM) is calculated as an average mark across your degree, which subjects weighted according to their credit points.

This calculation provides a measure of your academic performance and may be used by some firms. Your WAM does not appear on your results notice or academic transcript, so you will need to calculate it yourself- There is an explanation on our university website

The WAM is weighted according to the credit point value. This is assigned by the School of Law and will usually be 10. Only grades that are allocated a mark contribute to your WAM

Adding Referee(s)

Adding referees is crucial when making an application to firms. The referees you place into your CV should not be family members but those that you work with such as your manager and team member. You should also take the time to ask for approval for individuals to be your referees and also receive all contact information such as mobile number and email. The contact information should differentiate what is best for the referee to be contacted. After placing the referees in the applications consider speaking with the individuals that they will be contacted and consider how they should speak with the potential employer about your character in the work placement.

SAMPLE CV

Use a larger font to ensure your name stands out.

JUSTIN THYME

linkedin.com/in/justinthyme

e: justinthyme@live.com.au | m: 0400 000 000 | t: (02) 0000 0000

1 Clerk St, Guide NSW 2999

Most recruiters used social media during the recruitment process. Don't forget to include your LinkedIn profile!

Ensure that you are reachable on the number that you include and have a professional voicemail message.

EDUCATION**Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws**

Western Sydney University

Feb 2018 - Dec 2022 (Expected)

Notable Achievements:

- 5.5/7.0 Grade Point Average (overall)
- Dean's List (School of Law) - Top 10% of cohort (2018, 2019)
- High Distinction in 200814 Commercial Transactions Law
- High Distinction in 200011 Contracts
- Distinction in 200018 Law of Associations

If your GPA is not the most competitive, highlight your academic strengths through strong marks in areas that are relevant to the firm's practice.

Short courses, international programs & conferences are viewed favourably, particularly by firms that have an international presence.

Uppsala University, Sweden

- European Union Tax Law

Jan 2020 – Feb 2020

Higher School Certificate (HSC) NSW

Western Sydney High School, Guide NSW 2999

2012 - 2017

Notable Achievements:

- 95.00 ATAR - ranked top 10 in Year 12 Advanced English, Economics and Mathematics

Suitable if you are seeking roles in your first 1-3 years of Uni. Afterwards, you can omit this.

EMPLOYMENT**Real Law Clinic**

Legal Volunteer

March 2020 - Ongoing

If you have any legal experience, list it first.

- Prepared a client brief for lawyer acting on behalf of a small business owner in District Court proceedings relating to consumer warranty misrepresentations
- Conducted comprehensive legal research on the proposed changes to s18C and s18D of the Racial Discrimination Act and presented a research brief to senior lawyers
- Attended training sessions on case updates with regards to recent Federal Court decisions on internet scams and family law case updates with regards to shared parental responsibility
- First point of contact for clients on matters of consumer disputes and matters of family law

Achievements:

- Promotion to Senior Case Researcher within first 6 months
- Appointed as a Real Law Clinic Ambassador – speaker at local schools and community events about the Real Law Clinic's core function; providing equal access to the law

Customer Service Representative

CarePets, Parramatta

Nov 2018 - Nov 2020

- First point of contact for customers – I provided friendly and professional advice and strived to ensure that each customer is provided with the most suitable product for the care of his or her pet
- Provided training for new customer service representatives on branch-specific services e.g. the use of the Commonwealth Bank B-Pay Eftpos
- Prepared biannual training for all Parramatta CSR about new products and any discontinued products in order in accordance with documents and information provided by the Head Office

Include any achievements AND its significance. Chances are the recruiter will not know the meaning behind workplace recognition. By include a sentence to explain the achievement you will add context and meaning to your award.

Achievements:

- Named CarePets NSW 'CSR of the Year' – I was nominated by my manager as the Parramatta Branch CSR of the Year and then I was selected from a pool of 43 highly-esteemed colleagues for the award. The judging panel of Executive Directors noted the success of Parramatta Pet Day as an exciting initiative that improved community engagement and boosted the company's profile. They cited it as something that could be replicated across all branches as an annual event.

Private Music Tutor

Nov 2018 - Ongoing

- Awarded Diploma in Vocal Music (International Music Standard) with Distinction 2012
- Provide classical vocal training (theory and practical) to students from ages four to ten
- Prepare classes and exercises for students in accordance with the *International Music Standards* syllabus

Achievements:

- 95% of the 2016 cohort (15 students) received distinctions or above in the *International Music Standards* examinations
- 2017 student intake has increased by 80%

ACHIEVEMENTS

Awards and Prizes

- Australian Music Association (Western Sydney Region) "Young Educator of the Year" finalist (2021)
- Winner of Electorate of Smiles "How the law impacts life" Essay Writing Competition (2020). Prize Money \$1000 – Essay writing competition run by Member of Parliament for the seat of Smiles. My essay discussed consumer rights and awareness

Add context to your achievements.

Scholarships

- Australian Government New Colombo Plan Mobility Grant (2020) for European Union Tax Law short course program
- WSU The Academy Scholarship (2018 - Ongoing) in recognition of academic achievement and community leadership for my work at Youth Entrepreneurs and university clubs including the Western Sydney University Law Students' Association

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Community Organisation

- President of 'Youth Entrepreneurs' (2019 - Ongoing): organisation by youth, for youth, aimed at promoting youth in business, locally and globally, and conducting fundraisers for local and international humanitarian causes

Achievements:

- Hosted two forums; 'The Elevator Pitch' (2020) and 'Take a Risk' (2021) with inspirational guest speakers, Steve Hobs and Prichard Branson and industry experts from leading business advisors, Entrepreneur 101. Both events were attended by over 100 students and young start-up owners.
- Fundraised \$10,500 for the 'Voice for Victims' association (2021) which is a non-profit that advocates for the care and support of domestic violence survivors in NSW
- Fundraised \$6,900 for the 'Flying Legal Service' that acts as a mobile legal aid service for people in remote communities throughout regional NSW

Community involvement demonstrates that you are an engaged, proactive and generous individual. Don't forget to mention it!

6. YOUR GUIDE TO A STRONG COVER LETTER

A cover letter is ordinarily a 1 to 2 page document sent to the firm you are applying to alongside your CV. Your cover letter should provide the employer with insight into who you are, your skills, and achievements. It should also include why you took an interest in the particular firm, and what makes you a good fit for the firm. This is an opportunity to sell yourself to the firm, highlighting what makes you an ideal candidate, and why you wish to work there.

STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself and why you are writing to the firm.
Consider: If the recruiter were to stop reading here, what would you want them to know.

WHY ME?

Highlight your achievements, skills, and experiences. What makes you a strong candidate for the position?

WHY THE FIRM?

This paragraph should be tailored to the firm and demonstrate why you are interested in working at the firm.
Specific examples help, and this paragraph lets you demonstrate the depth of your research.

CONCLUSION

Summarise why you are a suitable candidate and thank the recruiter for their consideration.

GENERAL TIPS

- Tailor your cover letter to the firm. You should both use the firm's name throughout the cover letter and make sure that your "why the firm" paragraph is tailored to the firm specifically.
- Keep your cover letter to one page. Two pages at the absolute maximum.
- Make sure you have addressed it to the HR representative from the right firm. If you don't have the name of the HR representative, give the firm a call. Avoid using "Dear Sir/Madam" if at all possible.
- Avoid using formatting (such as bold, italics or underlining). Instead, make sure your cover letter is clear, concise, and specific.
- Use active language to convey confidence and communicate your point concisely.
- Identify the value that you bring to the firm. What experiences, skills and qualities do you have that make you a good candidate? These do not need to be legal skills, but you do need to promote yourself!
- Show your commercial awareness by demonstrating your understanding of aspects such as the firm, people, practice areas, and matters and projects the firm is undertaking, as well as the firm's values or vision.
- Ask a friend, colleague, or professional to review your cover letter to avoid spelling, grammatical or font errors.
- Seek review from a range of people – there are lots of different preferences for what makes a good cover letter so don't overly rely on one person's advice.



Don't know who to ask to review your cover letter? Reach out to an academic at the School of Law or the Careers Service.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Justin Thyme

1 Clerk St

Guide NSW 2999

justinthyme@live.com.au | 0400 000 000

Ms. Marie Nathan
Human Resources Manager
West Lawyers
1 Morning Street, Riverbed

02/04/2021

Dear Ms. Marie Nathan

West Lawyers 2017/2018 Summer Clerkship Application

Please accept my application for West Lawyers' 2021/2022 Summer Clerkship Program.

I am a penultimate year Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws student at Western Sydney University (WSU). I was first introduced to the West Lawyers legal team in my capacity as Vice President of the Law Students' Association at the 2020 WSU Law Careers Fair.

Academically, my efforts have been recognised in the WSU Dean's Merit List (2018, 2019), and as a recipient of the WSU The Academy Scholarship (2018). Professionally, my work ethic is demonstrated by my consistently positive work performance appraisals, my promotion to senior case researcher within my first six months at the Real Law Clinic (RLC), and in my Customer Service role at CarePets for which I was recognised as 2019 'NSW CSR of the Year'.

I have an interest in competition and consumer protection law. As a legal volunteer at the RLC, I have gained invaluable experience working across a range of consumer disputes. The heavy-traffic nature of client flow has honed my ability to communicate efficiently, particularly when briefing senior lawyers. When I first stepped into the role, I followed West Lawyers' landmark *Cheesecake Case* with great fascination and it inspired me to achieve a High Distinction in Contracts. My strong academic performance in Commercial Transactions Law and Law of Associations further highlights my interest in this core area of West Lawyers' practice.

What draws me most to applying for a Summer Clerkship at West Lawyers is the firm's dynamic reputation as an industry leader and innovator with a strong pro-bono program. As someone who is well-engaged in my local community through my position as President of Youth Entrepreneurs (2018-), West Lawyers' outward approach is something that resonates with me.

I am constantly seeking out new challenges and ways of improving myself personally and professionally, and I hope this clerkship will be the first step in an enduring career at West Lawyers. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Justin Thyme

Thank the firm for their consideration and reinstate your interest to work for them.

Make the connection between your brand and the company's.

Introduce yourself and provide a general overview of your letter.

Focus on your academic strengths. The cover letter is about selling yourself and putting your best foot forward. If your GPA is not best, there is no requirement to put it in your cover letter.

Exhibit knowledge about the firm's activities. The touch about the case's inspiration on the applicant demonstrates a level of personal connection and loyalty to the firm.

Show that you are an active and engaged student.

Note that both types of work; legal and non-legal, are used to highlight skills that may be transferrable to a clerk.

These next two paragraphs focus more on the firm and why you want to work there.

Demonstrate that you know about the firm's reputation beyond what could be found in a Google search.

SHOWING SOME PERSONALITY



Interests and Hobbies



Including personal interests in your application allows potential employers to gain insights into your personality, assess your fit within their firm's culture, and spark engaging conversations during interviews. These interests serve as icebreakers, demonstrate your well-roundedness and providing a more holistic understanding of you as a candidate beyond your professional qualifications.

By striking a balance between your personal interests and professional qualifications, you offer a glimpse into your unique characteristics and passions, enabling employers to evaluate your suitability and determine whether you align with their values and work environment.

Get to know the firm

Thoroughly researching and understanding the firm's achievements, practices, focuses, and vision is essential to align yourself effectively in your cover letter and interview. Performing detailed research adds depth to your application and allows you to stand out by showcasing your knowledge of the firm's intricacies. By demonstrating your familiarity with the specific aspects of the firm through sources like their website, LinkedIn, and news outlets, you not only impress potential employers but also show your genuine interest and potential for a strong fit within the organisation.



03 INTERVIEWS AND NETWORKING



3.1 THE INTERVIEW

Before the interview

Preparation

- Preparation is crucial before any interview. Take the time to review your CV and Cover Letter, familiarising yourself with the content and anticipating potential questions that may be asked by the employer.

Know the firm

- It is essential to research and understand various aspects of the firm you are applying to.
- This not only broadens your knowledge but also helps you identify specific areas within the firm that interest you and where you are seeking challenges.
- Demonstrating your knowledge and interest in the firm during the interview showcases your preparedness and eagerness to contribute.

Research the interviews

- Conduct thorough research on interview processes.
- Look for sample interview questions and consider watching expert advice videos on platforms like YouTube.
- Moreover, attending clerkship information evenings hosted by student law associations (like WSLSA!) can provide insights into how different firms conduct their interviews, as each firm may have its own unique approach.

Be yourself - don't hide your personality

- Authenticity is a strength that fosters confidence in potential employers, as they can better assess your compatibility with the firm's culture and envision how your personality can contribute to your future success.



Interview time

To allow for a smooth interview experience, diarise the interview and make any needed travel plans:

- If the interview location is unfamiliar, it may be beneficial to plan ahead in terms of the route and transportation options. This helps prevent unnecessary stress on the day and allows you to walk in both punctual and composed.

Arrive early

- Arriving early is recommended to avoid getting lost and ensure a smooth arrival at the firm. It allows you to familiarize yourself with the surroundings and take a moment to relax before the interview, helping you feel more composed and focused.

Make a good first impression

- Dressing professionally and appropriately shows that you take the opportunity seriously.
- A firm handshake and displaying confidence during introductions can leave a positive and memorable impression on the interviewer.

After the interview

Prepare questions

- Preparing thoughtful questions for the interview is crucial. These questions should be unique and well-researched, to engage the interviewer in a meaningful conversation.

Following up

- Take the initiative to reach out to the Hiring Team via email or phone! In following up on your application, you demonstrate enthusiasm and a proactive approach to opportunities.

3.2 SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell us about a time you exhibited independence in your work
2. Why are you interested in the work that our firm does?
3. How is our firm distinguished from others
4. What can you bring to the firm?
5. Who is a role model in your life?
6. Describe a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a problem
7. What are certain projects or initiatives that our firm has worked on that you find particularly interesting?
8. Why did you choose to study law?
9. What interests you about a career in commercial law?
10. Where do you see yourself in five/ten years? What are your long-term career goals?
11. How do you ensure effective communication with clients, colleagues, and opposing counsel?
12. Have you had experience drafting legal documents such as contracts, briefs, or pleadings? Can you provide examples?
13. How do you handle challenging or difficult clients? Can you share an experience and how you managed it?
14. How do you handle high-pressure situations or stress in your work?
15. How do you manage your time and prioritise tasks when handling multiple cases simultaneously?



3.3 COCKTAIL EVENING

The cocktail evening is a less formal social event and encourages you to get to know the people at the firm and meet your fellow candidates. This is held after your second-round interview. The event is an opportunity for you to showcase your personality, create professional connections and assist you to see what firm is a good fit for you. Here are some tips for you when making the most out of your cocktail evening:

GOING SOLO

- Do not let this dishearten you or intimidate you when going by yourself. Use this as your advantage to overcome your fears. Always consider this as a great opportunity to be able to speak with other individuals and network

DRESS CODE

- Even though the cocktail evening is less formal you should consider to keep your attire professional. You will be walking for more than three hours so wear comfortable shoes and dress comfortably where you are confident and this radiates to others

WORK THE ROOM

- This night is about leaving a great impression on prospective employers and colleagues. Have a nice laugh and never be shy when speaking with new people

LEAVING THE EVENING

- You have met, engaged and built a personal connection with many of your peers. Prior to your departure from the venue, make sure you thank the HR Team for hosting such a memorable event.



04 LIFE AFTER CLERKSHIPS



4.1 OFFERS

RECEIVING OFFERS

Offers from firms are released on Wednesday 14th September 2023. Once offers are released you should either accept or decline by Thursday 14th September 5:00pm. You also should be aware that you will be notified via phone call. The deadline is very strict and you must be organised prior in order to make a decision. Congratulations on making it this far in the process, receiving an offer is a cause for celebration.

DECLINING AN OFFER

If you decide to decline an offer you need to be able to know that once you decline you cannot go back on the offer. Make sure you consider that you contrast and compare to other offers if they were made to you.

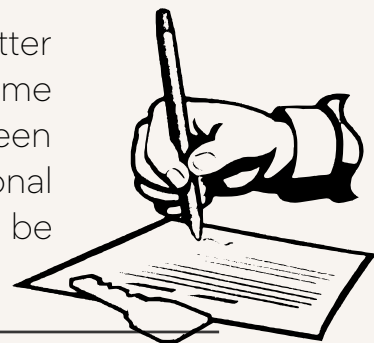
MULTIPLE OFFERS

If you have received multiple offers, congratulations! But there should be careful consideration on which offer to accept and which to decline. Throughout the application, you have hopefully considered which firms are a good fit for you. Maybe take into consideration the following when picking which firm suits you:

- What firms have practice areas that match your interest?
- Which firms culture is the right fit for you?
- Is there a specific clerkship program that can lead to a graduate position?
- Have you considered long-term and short-term goals in specific firms?

FOLLOWING UP

Communication is key when going into the legal field. It doesn't matter whether you have been accepted or declined, you should take the time to email a 'thank you' appreciation with the opportunity that has been provided to you. This is important as it maintains professional connections with the clerkship recruitment process and the firms will be appreciative of you saying thank you.



4.1 OFFERS

WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T RECEIVE AN OFFER

If you don't receive an offer, it's important not to be discouraged or intimidated as if it is a situation you have to overcome all on your own. Instead, view it as an opportunity to overcome your fears and leverage them to your advantage. Networking and engaging with other individuals become crucial in such circumstances. If needed, don't hesitate to seek support from the people around you, such as friends and loved ones.

Seeking feedback from the firms should be a priority. Contact the HR representatives and ask for advice on specific areas where you can improve, while also taking note of the areas where you have performed well. If you're unable to obtain feedback from the firms directly, consider arranging a meeting with a mentor, an academic from the School of Law, or a Careers Education Consultant at the Western Sydney University CareerHub.

The purpose of seeking feedback is to identify areas for future improvement and to gain a better understanding of the legal field for future opportunities. Additionally, if you're a penultimate-year student, some firms may offer the chance to apply for a summer clerkship in your final year as well.

5.1 WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RECENT CLERKS/GRADUATES

Clare Bickham, KING & WOOD MALLESONS 2022/23

Why KWM?



The KWM application was nice and simple. Although, I must add a caveat that they do make you individually enter your entire transcript but that's not too bad if you remember that the purpose of doing so is to help KWM remove bias from their decision making process. I really enjoyed the interview process at KWM. The first round was just an interview with a partner and senior associate, it was very informal and everyone was super friendly. The second round "interview" involved a lunch, a firm tour and a one-on-one coffee with a partner, this was a great opportunity to suss out the firm a bit more. Plus KWM always tried to pair you up with people from the teams or practice areas that you had expressed interest in on your application. The firm really makes an effort not just to get to know you but also to allow you to get to know the firm.

How was the clerkship application process?

The KWM application was nice and simple. Although, I must add a caveat that they do make you individually enter your entire transcript but that's not too bad if you remember that the purpose of doing so is to help KWM remove bias from their decision making process. I really enjoyed the interview process at KWM. The first round was just an interview with a partner and senior associate, it was very informal and everyone was super friendly. The second round "interview" involved a lunch, a firm tour and a one-on-one coffee with a partner, this was a great opportunity to suss out the firm a bit more. Plus KWM always tried to pair you up with people from the teams or practice areas that you had expressed interest in on your application. The firm really makes an effort not just to get to know you but also to allow you to get to know the firm.

What was the highlight of your summer clerkship?

The social aspect was a highlight of the clerkship, I was the only clerk from Western Sydney University and the social activities were a great opportunity to get to know my fellow clerks. The firm appoints social coordinators for the clerkship cohort who organise lots of social activities for the clerks, including weekly drinks, a clerk cruise and even a lawn bowls day. The inter-firm clerk sports competition is also a great way to meet clerks from all the firms and try a few different sports, I personally had the chance to discover I am terrible at ultimate frisbee. KWM also throws a fantastic Christmas party and there are plenty of team lunches and drinks (and potentially boat parties) to get to know your colleagues.

How was the summer clerkship?

The KWM clerkship, like most of the firms, involves two four-week rotations. I got to rotate through the Construction Dispute Resolution team and the Debt Capital Markets team. Neither of these teams were particularly high on my preference list but I was presently surprised my how much I enjoyed my time in the teams. I went into the clerkship expecting that I would get all the grunt work and not get to make any meaningful contributions to the team. But I actually got to do a great variety of work, including some really interesting legal research tasks and I did get involved in some pro-bono opportunities. Although, I did get some grunt work as expected but I still did enjoy the running documents to Court, delivering briefs to chambers and making some detailed file notes. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at KWM, and I am looking forward to when I go back as part of their grad program.

What is your advice to prospective clerks?

The clerkship process can be overwhelming, so be prepared and don't be too hard on yourself. I took the route of apply for everything and ended up submitting about 20 applications. I do not recommend doing this, it just added unnecessary stress and I ended up wasting time on applications for firms I didn't actually want to work for. Take the time to find out a bit about the firms and pick the firms that you think will be the best fit for you. You will get rejections, clerkships are very competitive, but don't let the rejections get you down, it is not the be all and end all. My final bit of advice is to take advantage of all the opportunities the firms give you to get to know them, go to the clerkship information sessions, the networking events and the cocktail evenings. A lot of firms will also pair you up with 'buddies', normally recent grads who have been in your shoes not too long ago. Don't be scared to reach out to your buddy, they can give you a great insight to the firm and help you prepare for the interview process. Take every opportunity – and good luck!!

Nishan Gill-Misson, MINTERELLISON 2022/23

Why MinterEllison?

MinterEllison stood out to me from the beginning of the application season. I had spoken to various lawyers and past summer clerks from MinterEllison, who provided glowing reviews on their experiences and time at the firm. Everyone I talked to before and during the application process from MinterEllison were incredibly down-to-earth, helpful, and willing to answer any questions I had. I felt my personal values and motivations matched those of the firm, as some of the key hallmarks of the firm are 'excellence without attitude', and 'valuing diversity in all its forms'. As a multi-national Australian law firm, the firm focuses on Australia's best interests, with clients being mostly from the Australian market. However, the firm also has international outreach and alliances with other global firms. This structure ensures that juniors can get involved in meaningful work from the start and be given the independence to advance professionally.

I had keen interests in workplace law, corporate advisory, and dispute resolution, and the firm has strong Chambers and Legal 500 rankings in these areas. MinterEllison also has some of the best lawyers in Australia that regularly appear on the AFR and are involved in market-leading work. Therefore, I knew the mentoring opportunities at MinterEllison would be invaluable and allow me to develop into a well-rounded professional. Beyond being a top-tier law firm, MinterEllison prides itself on being a professional services firm. Therefore, the firm has a rising consulting practice, consisting of IT, technology consulting, and risk and regulatory consulting teams. This meant that I had the flexibility to also gain experience in non-legal teams as a Summer Clerk and Graduate.



What do you think made your application stand out?

Although my grades were also strong, my work experience and active involvement in extra-curricular activities made my application really stand out. In interviews, I was often asked how I managed to be involved in so much while balancing my university studies. Coming into the clerkship application process, I had worked as a paralegal in private practice, in-house environments, and at CLC's such as the Aboriginal Legal Service, which allowed me to demonstrate transferable skills to the Summer Clerk role.

My extracurriculars included being involved in the WSLSA Executive, competing in legal technology, client interviewing and mooted competitions, being a Sikh Youth Australia Leader, going on overseas exchanges, competitive bhangra dancing, and swim teaching on weekends.

How did you tailor your resume and cover letter to each firm?

Before the clerkship applications opened, I already had a rough idea of the firms I wanted to apply to and could see myself working at beyond the clerkship. This came from chatting with various people who had completed clerkships and attending all the clerkship information seminars. When it came to applying, I had a narrowed list of firms I wanted to apply to. Attending the clerkship seminars and chatting with previous clerks gave me background knowledge about different firms, their service offerings, and staff programs. When researching, I further built on this knowledge to generate detailed research. In the cover letters and short answer responses, I tried to tie my research by 'name-dropping' someone at the firm I had previously spoken to when discussing aspects that appealed to me and further demonstrating how I resonated with that aspect of the firm. I also found browsing the firm website, AFR, GradConnection, GradAustralia and listening to clerkship podcasts such as LawFluent, aided my research and assisted in interview preparation. A valuable tip I was provided was that if someone picked up my cover letter and could replace the firm name with any other firm name and the cover letter still made sense, I had not tailored it enough, and it was too generic.

Since all firms offering clerkships are primarily commercial law firms, I left my resume the same for all the applications I submitted. My focus for my resume was to demonstrate business acumen and transferability of skills through my work experience and extra-curricular activities.

Describe your experience at the Cocktail Evening. Are there any memorable or interesting exchanges?

Overall, I found my experience at all the different firm Cocktail Evenings to be enjoyable. Contrary to popular belief, the final Cocktail Evening marks the end of the recruitment process for firms, and therefore, is a memorable form of celebration before offer day. The Cocktail Evening does not form part of the assessment to receive an offer but rather commemorates your hard work in reaching the final round interview stage. Therefore, enjoy the night as you have earned it.

Despite initial nerves, once the canapes and drinks were served, everyone was well-settled into friendly conversations with partners, senior associates, and lawyers. I found the Cocktail Evenings to be a great opportunity to ask any burning questions I had and chat to lawyers in teams I wanted to rotate in as a Summer Clerk. I tried to prioritise quality conversations over quantity, and therefore, at each Cocktail Evening, had great conversations with around 3-4 people. I would always aim to start the conversation in a relaxed and casual manner, asking the lawyer or member of HR I was speaking to, how their night was going. Since the Cocktail Evenings are scheduled on the weeknights, most lawyers have had a long day at work. Therefore, it is best to strike a balance between non-work-related conversations and also, making the most of the conversation by asking meaningful questions about their area of practice.

I also collected business cards or wrote down the names of lawyers and HR members I spoke to. This allowed me to add them on LinkedIn, where I could send a short thank you note following the event, for their time in speaking to me. I found this to be a great platform to continue conversations and ask to be put in touch with other people from the firm I wanted to speak to in the lead-up to offer day.

What is something that you wish you knew during the application process?

I wish I had known how long the actual application process would take. You will be required to balance your university studies, extra-curriculars, social life, and work commitments during the clerkship recruitment months. Be kind to yourself, and plan early! Drafting your tailored cover letters and short answer responses for each firm of interest, completing online one-way video interviews and psychometric testing, and attending multiple firm information evenings, cocktail nights, and several rounds of interviews will consume an incredible amount of time. However, through organised planning, navigating the clerkship process is manageable. If I could go back, I would try to start early and draft my applications (before the applications open) based on the previous year's application questions for that particular firm. Many firms ask similar questions every year. Therefore, trends can usually be identified – use this to your advantage. Then, when the actual applications open, you will already have had a head start. You can use this time to get feedback on your drafted applications, change whatever needs to be changed to fit this year's questions, and most importantly, ensure you are not rushing several applications last minute. This allows you to put your best foot forward.

Even if you are not successful in obtaining a clerkship in your penultimate year, do not lose hope and be disheartened! You will have another opportunity in your final year to reapply. You can use all the interview experience and feedback obtained throughout the process to improve your applications the following year, making you an even stronger clerkship candidate.

What was the most challenging aspect of your clerkship?

The most challenging aspect of my clerkship was balancing my time across all the clerk social activities, networking events, and assigned work in each rotation. As I wanted to make the most of each of my rotations, I would often accept a lot of different tasks and put my hand up for most things. However, because of this, I sometimes had difficulties in meeting certain deadlines. I learnt from these experiences by informing my team more about my current commitments and providing early notice if I had competing deadlines. This allowed me to maintain a manageable workload and not feel overwhelmed.

What was the highlight of your summer clerkship?

As a top-tier commercial law firm, MinterEllison acts for large blue-chip clients, allowing for great exposure as a Summer Clerk. Many of MinterEllison's lawyers and practice groups have strong Chambers and Legal 500 rankings. The firm also works on matters which regularly appear in the AFR. Being involved in market-leading work as a Summer Clerk was extremely rewarding. In the Workplace Law Team (which has a Band 1 Chambers ranking), I was given the opportunity to review affidavits and conduct legal research for a national class action the firm was working on at the time. I was regularly involved in exciting work throughout my Clerkship, and my ideas were always valued.

I also thoroughly enjoyed all the social and networking opportunities MinterEllison provided. In particular, I was the team captain for the Inter-Firm Clerk Sports Competition, which ran every week. I was incredibly proud of our team as we finished runners-up out of 15 competing firms!

Ash Oli, Current Graduate at Clyde & Co

Why Clyde & Co?

After finishing my final year at Western Sydney University, I was thinking about where I wanted to go as a Graduate and what I wanted to do with my life. In the process of researching different firms and I reached out to an Associate working at Clyde & Co and really resonated with what she had to say about the firm, the culture and the emphasis Clyde's have on learning and development.

I found Clyde's global presence very alluring, knowing that I would be able to access top-tier resources both inside and outside Australia really drove me towards Clyde's. As a relatively new firm in Australia, their trajectory for growth within the APAC region was very appealing.

Furthermore, the ability to access top tier resources while simultaneously being a very hands-on member of the team, essentially would allow me to get the best of both "big law" and "boutique firms". Clyde's also does not market themselves as a full-service firm but instead prides itself on providing a complete service within their core sectors of insurance, transport, energy, infrastructure and trade & commodities.



What do you think made your application stand out?

It's important to remember every firm and team is different and as such looks for different skills, experiences, interests and personalities. I personally tried to be as authentic as I could in my application and I believe that stood out to the firm. By talking about my non-legal interests, experiences, and activities I was able to highlight strong transferable skills and personal attributes that worked well with the firms' values and culture.

In addition to this, it is important to write in a clear and concise manner and not overcomplicate your writing style. It is also very important to show that you have done your research into the firm, I made sure to focus on showing how my experience and interests align with the firm's values and work.

How did you tailor your cover letter and resume to each law firm?

I only applied to Clyde & Co's graduate program so while drafting my cover letter I focused on highlighting the skills I have developed through university, retail work and legal work experience. I also made sure to incorporate how my personal ethics and practices align with the firm's values.

It is also beneficial to peruse the firm's recent publications to see if anything catches your eye and include a reference to the publication in your application, this demonstrates that you are interested in the firm and its practice as a whole and not just the graduate position itself.

What were some of the questions asked in the interview?

Some of the questions I was asked in my interviews are listed below:

- Why do you want to practice law?
- Why are you interested in the work that our firm does?
- What can you bring to the firm?
- What are your professional goals?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?

What was the highlight of your graduate rotation so far?

The highlight of my graduate rotation so far has been watching my skills grow and develop in practise. Other than that, being able to form strong bonds and connections with my co-workers through work events has been great.

2023 WSLSA Clerkship Guide: Summer Clerk Testimonial

“My clerkship at Gilbert + Tobin (‘G+T’) had an influence on a number of areas in my life, and this influence reached far beyond just professional learning. Of course, I learnt so much about new legal topics and the profession in general. But what I found equally important and impactful was the social side of the clerkship and the personal development that I experienced over the 8-week program.

At the WSU clerkship event, G+T came across as the most approachable firm and I was able to have a good chat with the firm’s representative. During the interview process I felt really supported by the firm and they seemed interested in me as a person, and my views about the firm were reinforced.

I clerked in Technology + Digital and Intellectual Property, and in both these groups I worked on matters that presented new questions about the law and its application to new technology. Through writing ‘Digital Radar’ articles in T+D, I learnt a lot about emerging laws related to technology, while building a sense of belonging in the group as I became an ‘expert’ on that topic. The work in IP was so varied, and I was asked to help with lots of small tasks which gave me a good feel for the breadth of work. The quick turnaround needed on some tasks also built my time management and communication skills. It was great to learn really practical things throughout the experience, such as document management, email etiquette, memo drafting/formatting and even just office conduct norms (as this was my first office job).

I was lucky to be doing the clerkship with an awesome group of clerks, so we were all really enthusiastic about making the most of the social opportunities – this made the experience so enjoyable. I really appreciated the firm’s effort to organise social and team-building exercises like pizza-making and trivia which were a great way to break up the working week and emphasise that the program wasn’t just about working hard. Clerk sport was another highlight, and I could see how strongly our group had bonded compared to other firms through our very vocal and enthusiastic support of all our team members. There were also opportunities through clerk sport to interact with clerks from other firms which was great. These social experiences have obviously had a very positive impact on the clerks as we catch up regularly outside of work even though the program has finished.

The clerkship definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I feel a lot more confident in my ability and my future in the profession because of it. It was great to be introduced to corporate law through the clerkship, as there were many new challenges, but the support was consistent and structured. There were a few times where I had to do something completely new which was daunting, but the support and feedback I received on these tasks has boosted my confidence. The way that I was treated as part of the team throughout the program (for example, through working with lots of people within the team, being involved in team meetings, and invitations to Christmas parties) also increased my sense of belonging to the profession and has made me excited for a potential future at G+T.”

- Hannah Kaine (former WSU student, 2021 Summer Clerk and 2023 Graduate)



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RESUME CHECKLIST

Use this list to check that you have completed a professional resume and have tailored it to the position/role. Remember you can move areas of your resume around to highlight the most relevant information for the position.

- ☐ Have you captured the employer's attention on the first page with your most relevant experience and skills?
- ☐ Does the resume look tailored and not based on a standard template? Is the information relevant to the hiring manager's needs, as opposed to a one-size-fits-all document?
- ☐ Did you include relevant keywords and appropriate industry terms?
- ☐ Is the resume without any careless typos, spelling, grammar or syntax errors?
- ☐ Did you avoid writing the resume in an implied first-person voice with personal pronouns (I, me, and my)?
- ☐ Does the resume provide a visually pleasing, professional presentation? Is the resume inviting to read, with clear sections and ample white space?
- ☐ Is a career summary included so the reader immediately knows your value proposition (recommended for later lawyers, career changers)?
- ☐ If this is a resume for a career change, does it include supporting details that show how your past experience is relevant to the new job?
- ☐ Is the resume's length and overall appearance appropriate given your career level and summary (2-3 pages as a guideline)?
- ☐ Are there design elements (bullets, bolding, lines, margins) to guide the readers' eyes through the document and highlight important content?
- ☐ Does your resume contain key headings? Is the page break formatted correctly so it doesn't break up sentences?
- ☐ Is your career history listed in reverse chronological order (most recent job first), with your legal experience first?
- ☐ Are your achievements distinguished from your responsibilities? Remember achievements are outcome focused and over and above your day-to-day responsibilities
- ☐ Are achievements quantified by using numbers, percentages, dollar amounts, or other concrete measures of success?
- ☐ Do achievement statements begin with strong, varied action verbs? eg. developed, delivered, managed?

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

Use this list to check that you have completed a professional cover letter and have tailored it to the position/role. Remember to always address the selection criteria required for the position.

- ☐ Does your letter show your genuine interest and enthusiasm for the job / organisation?
- ☐ Does your letter look tailored to the role / organisation and not based on a standard template?
- ☐ Does your letter try to build a connection with the reader? Does it differentiate you enough?
- ☐ Does your letter show your research and knowledge of the organisation beyond a quick google search?
- ☐ Does your letter present you in a positive light and as a good fit for the organisation and role?
- ☐ Is your letter one A4 page long with no more than 4 paragraphs?
- ☐ Does your letter have the right tone? (read out loud to check)
- ☐ Have you taken out any information about yourself that might highlight any gaps / weaknesses?
- ☐ Have you included your contact phone number and professional email address?
- ☐ Is the cover letter addressed to the correct person with their title, address?
- ☐ Have you commenced with the correct greeting? eg. Dear Ms Slater
- ☐ Have you included the title and reference number of the job?
- ☐ Does the employer know why you are applying for the position and where you saw the position?
- ☐ Have you included your education, qualifications and current study?
- ☐ Have you provided specific evidence of your skills for this specific job and written about them without exaggerating?
- ☐ Have you highlighted your most relevant work experience first, ie. legal?
- ☐ Have you included the most relevant and recent achievements that promote you well?
- ☐ Have you addressed any other requirements of the job? eg. global relocation, etc
- ☐ Is your letter grammatically correct with no spelling or typing errors?
- ☐ Have you had someone proof read it just in case?

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WHAT TO EXPECT

"Clyde & Co combines top-tier work with the 'small firm feel'. You'll have the opportunity to get involved in a range of complex, challenging matters and to make meaningful contributions from day one of your career. You'll work alongside industry leaders in diverse, supportive teams, and you'll quickly realise that everyone is genuinely interested in you and your professional development. So, if you're excited to grow, this is the place for you!"

– Kyle Denning, 2021/2022 Summer Clerk

KEY DATES

Applications open: 5 June

Applications close: 9 July

Offers made: 13 September

Summer Clerkship dates: 27 November – 2 February

CONTACT

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ELEVATE YOUR EXPERIENCE

ABOUT US

With over 25 offices spanning Asia, Europe, Australasia, and the Middle East, careers at Herbert Smith Freehills offer our graduates the opportunity to experience being part of a truly global law firm. Working with some of the most significant organisations in the world, opportunities to have social impact, and learning from our world-class team every day will enable you to create solid foundations on which to build your career in law.

We're proud to say that we put people first. Our firm is built on a diverse culture, reflective of the societies in which we live and work. That's why inclusivity is key to our success. At Herbert Smith Freehills, you'll be valued for what makes you different and accepted for who you are. We recognise the power of diversity and inclusion to drive innovation, collaboration and business outcomes. So, whether it's working on the latest advancements in digital law, taking part in some of the biggest mergers and acquisitions around, or helping people through our extensive pro bono work – you'll develop the skills to solve the most complex challenges in thoughtful and innovative ways.

WE WELCOME DIFFERENT

Great lawyers are both curious and creative. We encourage you to challenge assumptions and open yourself up to new ideas. So, what exactly are we looking for?

There's no single path to becoming an exceptional commercial lawyer. We look beyond your academic record and your technical aptitude. We're focussed on finding people who have the curiosity to explore all the angles and the empathy to place themselves in their client's shoes.

In line with our **10 Actions for Change** we are proud to use the **Rare Contextual Recruitment System (CRS)**. The **CRS** allows us to understand each applicant's achievements in the context that they have been gained. We understand that not every candidate's achievements look the same on paper – and we want to recruit the best people, from every background.

CLERKSHIP PROGRAM

We select many of our graduates through our vacation clerkships. During this immersive experience, you'll receive hands-on practical experience, as you work on some of the diverse challenges facing the team you're collaborating with.

You will gain a deeper understanding of life at the firm and what your future could look like if you join us. Some key features include the opportunity to:

- Sit within a specific team, delivering real work for key clients
- Before you join, submit a preference for a team to tailor your experience
- Navigate the first step of your career with partner and graduate mentoring support
- Attend workshops and presentations covering all our practice areas
- Contribute to our pro bono practice
- Work with cutting edge technology through our innovation projects
- Networking opportunities to meet people across the firm

Contacts



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KEY DATES/DEADLINES

SYDNEY

Positions	35–40
Clerkship programs	1 Summer
Applications for all 2023/24 programs open	5 June 2023
Applications for all 2023/24 programs close	9 July 2023
Offers made	13 September 2023

Please note: An application should only be submitted to the office where you intend to start your career as a graduate. Multiple applications will not be considered.





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A HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS CLERK'S REFLECTIONS

"I was surprised at how many partners were willing to take the time to speak to us about their practice areas, despite being notoriously busy, and even taking us for chats over coffee - whether these chats were about the work itself, our personal interests, meaningful career advice or something completely unrelated. It showed me that the firm genuinely values its people and wants to see us succeed."

My name is Shanya Singh and I was a vacation clerk over the Summer 2022/23 session. I would describe my pathway to HSF as different to others, as I did not come from one of the 'Group of Eight' universities, and rather am studying a double degree of law and business at Western Sydney University. I also had never worked as a paralegal in a law firm. Despite feeling like the odds were against me, I realised

throughout the clerkship recruitment process how much HSF values diversity, extracurriculars and non-legal experiences.

How my non-legal experience, background & skills helped me as a clerk

My second degree is in business, majoring in human resource management, and I also worked in a workplace relations role prior to the clerkship. These non-legal skills that I developed helped me in my rotation through the Employment, Industrial Relations & Safety team, as it allowed me to better understand the tasks that I was given and my comprehension of certain terms/concepts. For example, I already had exposure to the terms that are found in modern awards and enterprise bargaining agreements, which helped me in tasks where I had to compare the two, and overall allowed me to make meaningful contributions.

I have also worked as an analyst (consulting) in a professional services firm, where I had minimal legal exposure, as well as working in retail for many years. Throughout these experiences I gained a variety of skills, including written/verbal communication and customer service, which were all looked upon favourably, especially given the firm's focus on client empathy. Overall, despite never officially working as a paralegal, I felt that my skills, background, and experience in these non-legal areas were well-recognised by HSF.



Shanya Singh
Paralegal, (Vacation Clerk 2022/23)

Expectations before joining Herbert Smith Freehills

Prior to joining HSF, my expectations for the firm were similar to that of any other 'Big 6' law firm. That is, with the firm being market leading in many practice areas, that everyone would be constantly busy and that there may be a solely 'serious' firm culture.

However, I quickly realised throughout the recruitment process and clerkship role itself that this was not the case with HSF. Everyone I met, from graduates all the way up to partners, were incredibly approachable. I was surprised at how many partners were willing to take the time to speak to us about their practice areas, despite being notoriously busy, and even taking us for chats over coffee - whether these chats were about the work itself, our personal interests, meaningful career advice or something completely unrelated. It showed me that the firm genuinely values its people and wants to see us succeed, and allowed me to learn so many new things from people who are willing to share their knowledge.

Clerkship application experience and advice

My clerkship application experience was positive and overall felt quite casual. It began with the online application and personality questionnaire, then two one-on-one interviews with a partner, a few information sessions, and a cocktail evening. It was very accommodating, in that there were remote options always available, and we were given buddies to provide us guidance and support throughout the entire process.

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Top 100 Graduate Employer Awards 2023



Top Graduate Employers 2023
Australian Association of Graduate Employers



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A focus on you

Our wellbeing program, leave policies and entitlements ensure our people are supported.

An inclusive culture

It's no surprise that the MinterEllison workplace culture is awarded key inclusion awards and benchmarks. We're truly inclusive and value diversity in all its forms.

A passion for social justice

You'll have the chance to join our pro bono and community investment program to help address disadvantage.

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We're King & Wood Mallesons. The top tier international law firm, from Asia, for the world. The world's leading organisations turn to us to unlock opportunities and deliver smart, considered, and confident advice. Where others see problems, we see possibilities.

Innovation is in our DNA. We equip our people with the skills to partner with our clients and bring to life pioneering solutions which will help them to adapt, reinvent and evolve. We believe innovation comes from giving our people room to grow. At KWM, our people are encouraged to shape their own career path, supported every step of

the way with world-class training, coaching and hands-on experience.

Diversity of thought, perspective and experience is critical to our culture. We provide a broad, inclusive and open environment in which our people are fully supported to bring their whole selves.

Our impact:



We are making progress towards our target of 40% female representation at partnership level



Our LGBTQ+ Inclusion Network at KWM (LINK) raises awareness of and advocates in relation to LGBTQ+ issues and concerns, and promotes inclusion, provides support and builds a sense of community for LGBTQ+ identifying people and allies



Over 90% of our lawyers delivered 44,240 pro bono hours in FY22



Over 231 organisations received legal assistance in FY22



Over \$766,000 was raised & donated via DigDeep® (workplace giving project) to 27 community organisations in FY22

Our programs

SEASONAL CLERKSHIP PROGRAM

Applications open: 5 June 2023

Applications close: 9 July 2023

How to apply: Via our online application system. Head to our website link below.

We offer clerkships that give you insight into what it's like to be a lawyer at King & Wood Mallesons. You'll get to know our people, the way we work, our culture, practice areas, clients and more.

You will learn the day-to-day skills to get you started, the core practice teams at King & Wood Mallesons, our culture, and our people. You'll find that people from every part of the business will help you by sharing their knowledge and supporting you through the early stages of your career and beyond.

GRADUATE PROGRAM

We offer a unique future-focused experience and invest heavily in your development to support you throughout your journey. You will benefit from a bespoke comprehensive learning and development program tailored specifically for our graduates.

Our commitments:



Reduce our emissions by:

- Becoming certified carbon neutral by December 2022 **Complete**
- Setting science-based targets by December 2023 and reaching net zero emissions by 2050



Source 100% renewable energy for our Australian operations before 2024.



Update and re-certify our Environmental Management System by June 2022. **Complete**



Undertake various energy, paper, water and waste reduction initiatives (ongoing).

Our graduate program has an emphasis on legal excellence, technical expertise, commercial skills, knowledge management, legal project management, innovation, social and self-development and client focus.

We offer:

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Key contact:

G R E T A T R E L O A R

PEOPLE & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
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EMAIL GRETA.TRELOAR@AU.KWM.COM



careers.kwm.com/en/graduates-australia

CLERKSHIP PROFILE



CLARE BICKHAM

SEASONAL CLERK INTAKE: 2022/23

Area/s of rotation: Construction Dispute Resolution & Debt Capital Markets
University: Western Sydney University
Degree: Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Arts

What was the application and interview process like?

The KWM application was nice and simple (even though you do have to individually enter your entire transcript – but once you remember it's to help KWM remove bias it's worth it). I really enjoyed the interview process; it was very informal, and everyone was really friendly. The firm really made an effort not just to get to know you but also to allow you to get to know the firm.

Why did you choose King & Wood Mallesons?

KWM is an excellent firm, and it was always one of my top picks. But it was my experience during the clerkship recruitment that really made my choice. Everyone at KWM was so friendly and the process was so simple, and as unhelpful as it is to say, I just got really good vibes from the firm.

What was your clerkship experience vs. your initial expectations?

My initial expectation was that I would get all the grunt work and not really get to make any meaningful contributions to my team. My actual experience was that I got a great variety of work. Of course I did get to do the 'grunt work' of running documents up to Court and file noting, but I also got given a lot of really interesting research tasks.

How would you describe the social aspect of the clerkship?

The social aspect was a highlight of the clerkship. I was the only clerk from my university and the social activities were a great opportunity to get to know my fellow clerks. Our social coordinators did a wonderful job, organising weekly drinks, a clerk cruise and even a lawn bowls day. KWM also throws a fantastic Christmas party and there are plenty of team lunches and drinks to get to know your colleagues.

Do you have any advice to give prospective clerks?

The clerkship process can be very overwhelming, so be prepared and don't be too hard on yourself. Also make sure to take advantage of all the opportunities the firms give you to get to know them, go to the clerkship events, and don't be scared to reach out to your 'buddy' to get the inside gossip.

Together we make a mark

Discover White & Case

Pioneering united human – three values that shape our distinctive culture and differentiate us from others.

Working across borders

Over the past 100 years, we've built an unrivalled network of 44 offices in 30 countries. That investment is the foundation for White & Case's client work in over 180 countries.

Many White & Case clients are multinational organisations with complex needs that require the involvement of multiple Firm offices. We believe global exposure is an integral part of becoming a great lawyer, and our graduates and trainees are encouraged to take up international secondment opportunities, either as a part of their program, or early in their career.

Virtual Learning Platform

Our virtual learning programs are a great opportunity to discover life as a White & Case graduate or trainee, and experience the stimulating and challenging reality of working as an international commercial lawyer.

You'll gain insight into the fast-paced innovative projects and matters our teams work on and gain valuable skills on true-to-life legal tasks. This experience will be recognised on our application forms and will demonstrate your interest in law and White & Case.

All of our global virtual learning programs can be found on Forage, by searching "White & Case".

Global Citizenship

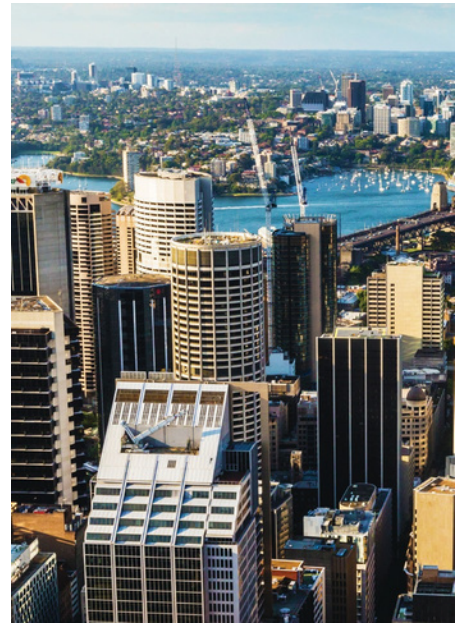
Global Citizenship comprises pro bono, volunteering, charitable giving, legal education and environmental sustainability. It helps us fulfill our responsibilities to the global community with the greatest possible impact.

Lawyers from every office and practice participate, with more than 122,000 hours of free legal services provided last year.

Our Global Pro Bono practice allows our junior lawyers to build a network outside of their initial practice and team, both locally and globally. It also gives them the opportunity to implement their theoretical learnings from law school, and take a degree of ownership early in their careers.

Practice areas in Asia-Pacific

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Energy, Infrastructure, Project and Asset Finance
International Arbitration
Investment Funds
Mergers & Acquisitions and Private Equity
Restructuring and Insolvency
Tax
White Collar



Ready to find out more?

White & Case offer a four-week winter program in Sydney and four-week summer and winter programs in Melbourne.

Please note the following Australian clerkship application periods:

2023 Sydney Winter Clerkship: **Closed**
(Applications will open in March 2024 for our 2024 program)

2023 – 24 Melbourne Vacation Clerkships: **3 July – 13 August 2023**

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