

Internship Program:

What is the Internship Program?

The ANU College of Law's internship program offers students an unparalleled opportunity to carry out law-based research projects in a legal professional workplace. The course requires and develops both legal knowledge and a lawyer's approach to problem identification, analysis and recommendations.

The internship work setting may be in the government departments, law firms, parliament, and non-government organisations. The project, which is settled by written agreement among the student, professional, and internship director, may be multi-disciplinary but must have a strong law element and of practical utility to the workplace organisation.

Enrolment Requirements & Internship Agreements

To be accepted into the program, students must average a credit or better (ie 60 % or more) in law study. A student must be in the final year, or the year before final year, of the law degree and have an academic record which illustrates the ability to research and report upon a complex project.

Applications should be made to the Program Convenor. Once students qualify for entry to the program, they will be notified in writing. The Program Convenor will discuss placement options with the students and put them in touch with a suitable professional supervisor. An appropriate project will develop in discussion with the professional supervisor and an Internship Agreement settled. Students must formally enrol in the course through the Faculty Office once they have been accepted.

Deadlines

See Deadlines page at: <http://law.anu.edu.au/Undergraduate/internship/deadline.asp>

Briefing notes:

IMPORTANT: Students must provide a copy of these briefing notes (and all attachments) to their Professional Supervisor at their first meeting.

Set up of an internship project

After acceptance onto the program, it is necessary to identify a project which suits the student's skills and experience in the light of the areas in which the student has expressed an interest. It is important to identify topics from areas, which you have studied. (For example, it is not feasible to identify a project at the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions if you haven't studied any criminal law.) Sometimes students have a well-defined project and an organisation that has agreed to support the internship. In other cases students will need assistance to develop a project and secure the support of a workplace organisation. The Program Convenor has developed contacts (usually from prior internships) with a wide variety of organisations that are willing from time to time to support internships. The Program Convenor will put students in touch with a suitable professional supervisor and an appropriate project will normally develop in discussion with that supervisor.

Internship Agreement

After a suitable project has been identified, an internship agreement must be settled with the professional supervisor and the Program Convenor. (It is important that the professional supervisor must be a lawyer.) Settling the internship agreement is an important part of the program. The project description is the most important part of the agreement because the student will ultimately be assessed on whether they have completed the work and analysis, which the project description requires. The agreement also sets out the basic responsibilities of the Intern and the Supervisors. And it covers such matters as access to research materials, access to the professional supervisor for guidance, and dates by which things have to be done. A sample internship agreement is attached to these briefing notes. The agreement will also provide for the date by which the final paper is due to be handed to both supervisors.

Role of program convenor

The role of the Program Convenor is

- to assist interns in identifying suitable projects,
- to provide guidance in the development of the project,
- assist in the resolution of any problems in the course of the work, and
- to assess the final paper in consultation with the professional supervisor.

The Program Convenor will normally not settle drafts of internship papers. The primary responsibility for development of the paper is with the intern, supervised by the relevant professional supervisor. Professional supervisors are in the best position to know what they want. In any event, it is much more complex trying to deal with the requirements of two supervisors in the course of a project. The Program Convenor is however available to discuss matters with students particularly when any problems arise. Students who have any questions should not hesitate to contact the Convenor on the number below.

Contact details:

Program Convenor: Mr Fergus Thomson

Email: ThomsonF@law.anu.edu.au

Administration Officer: Undergraduate Administrator

Email: Ugadmin.law@anu.edu.au

Phone: 6125 3482

Assessment Information

Students will be required to submit a research paper. Papers are marked according to two scales (one used by the professional supervisor and the other used by the academic supervisor/Program Convenor) (see Assessment Scales). The scale ratings are combined to produce a mark.

The professional scale concentrates on the utility of the paper while the academic scale concentrates on legal scholarship. Therefore, to score highly a paper should be have practical recommendations or conclusions of use to the workplace organisation as well as demonstrating legal scholarship. Interns should therefore try to select topics, which will have both features.

Students should also be mindful of some important related matters, namely

- timeliness is an important issue. The time for filing final papers will not be extended unless there are grounds, which would warrant the deferment of an examination.
- it is important to discipline yourselves to keep within the word limits
- When final papers are submitted they should be
 - structured in a logical manner
 - have page and paragraph numbers (this assists supervisors in identifying parts of the paper when they discuss it over the telephone)
 - the covering page should contain
 - the title of the project,
 - contact details for the intern,
 - the professional supervisor and the academic supervisor,
 - a word count.
 - Please do not bind the final internship paper, simply staple it with a solid staple in the top left hand corner.