Careers in Law:
Pathways, Challenges and Success

Law is a very versatile degree - a useful passport into the ever changing work environment. Law graduates are widely employed across many fields because they have developed a sound understanding of the Australian legal system and how it applies to various industry sectors. A law graduate will be competent with legal documents, legal advice, negotiating and mediating on legal matters as well as legal representation.

Laws apply to individuals, organisations and government departments on a daily basis, meaning that a qualification in law will see you eligible for employment well beyond the court room. Your knowledge and awareness of the law and its application is a valuable asset to organisations from all sectors.

Engage in your career before you graduate

To be competitive in the workplace it is important to demonstrate your willingness to get involved in the profession and engage in industry early. Explore the numerous types of law (such as arbitration law, contract law etc.) to discover the niche you are most interested in. Active participation in the field helps to set you apart when applying for positions as you are able to provide specific examples demonstrating the skills and capabilities you offer as a graduate and your passion shines through.

Show prospective employers you are an active contributor. Some useful tips include:

- Seek out opportunities to gain experience in a legal support role as a student
- Be actively involved in MSLS (Murdoch Student Law Society) and increase your networks
- Engage with the Careers and Employment Centre and access the Murdoch Careers Portal – Career Connect (www.careerconnect.murdoch.edu.au) to register for career fairs, industry events etc.
- Apply for the Moot Court Bench and competitions run through MSLS find out about Work Integrated Learning opportunities (WIL) including SCALES (Southern Communities Advocacy Legal Education Service.
- Consider a study abroad experience or exchange to another university;
- Apply for clerkships, internships or vacation work within industry and;
- Be a strategic volunteer -the Murdoch Volunteering Hub (situated next to the Guild Shop on Bush Court) is a useful resource for ideas on where to gain relevant experience. NOTE: you can also graduate with a “Community and Career Skills Development Transcript”. Contact The Volunteering Hub via email: volunteering@the-guild.com.au or phone: 08 9360 6307
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Careers and industries in Law

In Australia, the legal profession is regulated independently by each State and Territory. Graduates wanting to practice in Western Australia are required to undertake additional Practical Legal Training (PLT) before applying for admission as a legal practitioner and obtaining a WA practicing certificate. PLT is commonly achieved by the completion of a PLT Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice through the WA College of Law.

Lawyers gain employment in a wide variety of settings such as:
- Administrative Tribunals
- Corrective Services and Child Protection Services
- Banks and other financial institutions
- Magistrates Court, District Court and Supreme Court

There are a number of specialty areas of law such as: commercial, criminal, family, property, probate, migration, workers’ compensation/ personal injuries litigation, mergers and acquisitions, tax, human rights / equal opportunity, native title, industrial relations, intellectual property, environmental protection etc..

Common job role titles include:
- Lawyer
- Solicitor
- Barrister
- Magistrate / Judge
- Mediator/Conciliator
- Legal Counsel
- Commercial Litigator

A degree in Law can open many different doors but you have to pave your own journey through your experiences. You have the ability to continuously develop your career by actively engaging in university life, networking initiatives and stepping up to opportunity. Choosing a Law degree is just the beginning.

Further information:
The Law Society of WA
www.lawsocietywa.asn.au
WA College of Law
www.collaw.edu.au
Job Guide
www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au
Legal Practice Board of WA
www.lpbwa.org.au

Adaptability of your Law degree and alternative careers:

Your sharp mind, solid work ethic, strong analytical and research skills and ability to effectively communicate can help launch a number of alternative careers. Considering a second major or an additional minor can further diversify your career options.


Law graduates have traditionally been successful in securing multi-discipline Graduate Program roles, which provide an excellent foundation for an alternative professional career. Graduate Programs are structured professional development programs specifically designed for new graduates. Final year students apply for these positions from March for the following year. Murdoch Law graduates have previously secured Graduate Officer positions with both Government Departments as well as larger organisations across the nation.

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Further information:
The Law Society of WA
www.lawsocietywa.asn.au
WA College of Law
www.collaw.edu.au
Job Guide
www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au
Legal Practice Board of WA
www.lpbwa.org.au