

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE



# Acknowledgements

*Many thanks to everyone who made the production and publication of the 2021 Sydney University Law Society International Student Guide possible. In particular, we would like to thank the Sydney Law School and the University of Sydney Union for their continued support of SULS and our publications.*

*We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land that the University of Sydney is built upon, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge that this land was and always will be Aboriginal Land and we are proud to be on the lands of one of the oldest surviving cultures in existence. We respect the knowledge that traditional elders and Aboriginal people hold and pass on from generation to generation, and we acknowledge the continuous fight for constitutional reform and treaty recognition to this day. We regret that white supremacy has been used to justify Indigenous dispossession, colonial rule and violence in the past, in particular, a legal and political system that still to this date doesn't provide Aboriginal people with justice.*

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# FOREWORD



**Sissi Xi Chen**  
International Student Officer,  
Sydney University Law  
Society

There is no doubt how difficult 2020 was. After a year of crisis and uncertainty, we have witnessed each other surviving two semesters of Zoom classes, on-and-off lockdowns, and bad wifi/VPN. Till this very day, some of us are still studying remotely under various degrees of impact caused by border closures.

It is despite all these difficulties, our fellow international students have demonstrated remarkable spirit and resilience in supporting each other through this very difficult pandemic. This year, the SULLS International Student Guide is brought to you by a record-high number of 12 editors dedicated to provide the information you need the most. Whether you are a first-year student looking for study tips, or a penultimate year student looking for clerkship information, this guide has what you need.

Outside of this Guide, you can find us every Thursday night 6-7pm on SULLS International Student Catch-ups - one topic per week - bringing to you the latest advice (and gossip). Also keep an eye out for SULLS career workshops and social events, which are also open to international students. We also have a committee dedicated to help you troubleshoot your law school life when things get rough... So buckle down and join us for this ride!

Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to email me at: [international@suls.org.au](mailto:international@suls.org.au).



**Wendy Hu**  
President, Sydney University  
Law Society

Welcome to Sydney!

For international students like yourselves, starting at Sydney Law School not only entails embarking on a new academic program, but moving to a new country. As a domestic student, I can only speculate as to how that must feel. Having briefly lived overseas, but still with the perspective of an outsider, there must be a mixture of excitement and nerves compounded by the prospect of living in a new city.

In 2021, the Sydney University Law Society (SULLS) recognises that international student experiences are more diverse than ever due to COVID-19. For some of you, the above will ring true. For others, you will begin law school studying remotely in your home country. Online classes present their own unique challenges of time zone differences, isolation and screen fatigue.

SULLS is committed to ensuring all international students feel supported and well-informed during this difficult period of uncertainty. This year, in addition to the social events, careers programs and competitions the International Portfolio runs, SULLS will be bringing a renewed focus on mental health and advocacy. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Sissi Chen (the International Officer) or the broader Executive team in-person in the SULLS office (Room 103, New Law Building) during our office hours from 10am-2pm on Monday-Thursday, with extended hours for part-time JD and LLM students until 6pm on Tuesday. For those studying remotely, we will be having Zoom and WeChat office hours. Alternatively, shoot us a message on our Facebook page or via email. We are always here to help.

# LAW SCHOOL

## Starting Law at Sydney



Nhi (Nikki) Bui  
LLBII (Offshore)

Why choose law to study? A simple and short question that every law student and lawyer would ask themselves. For me, it is simply because law is my area of interest. I was always too excited whenever it came to literature or legal subjects since secondary school. When studying law, I learn about perspectives and logic. The more I read about case law, the more it opens up inner stories to me. I guess that is the beauty of law when you apply the rules and regulations into a person's own story. Law is also about rights and justice. Studying law allows me to develop critical thinking and strong reasoning skills as well as awareness of my rights and responsibilities.

I joined SULLS at the beginning of 2020 and signed up for the Negotiation Competition with my friends. Unfortunately, the competition was cancelled due to COVID-19 and I had to return to Vietnam after that. I hope this year will be a better year and I can sign up for more SULLS activities. Apart from SULLS, I am Secretary of ViSUS - a society for Vietnamese

International students at Sydney University. In July 2020, I also interned at Allen & Overy firm in Hanoi. I think participating in extracurricular activities will help students to make new friends, learn new skills, and most importantly, be happy within the university environment.

I would say that studying law offshore is extremely difficult and tiring. I'm not confident enough to advise anyone but there are some general tips I will share. First is trying to finish as many readings as you can for every week before the tutorial. I know the amount of readings is massive but the more you read, the more knowledge you will gain. Do some legal research after you read as well, especially when you need more information on a specific topic. Second is to pay attention to the advice that your tutor gives during your Zoom tutorial. It might be on assignments or presentations or career. Prepare yourself to come to tutorials with questions too. Don't be afraid to ask!

## University and Law School Administration

Note: The information below concerns general academic and administrative advice only and may not account for all obstacles related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Please regularly check your email account and the university websites for updates on travel/academic restrictions:  
<https://www.sydney.edu.au/study/coronavirus-infection-university-of-sydney-advice.html>

### Enrolment (onshore and offshore)

You must enrol in order to commence your studies at the University of Sydney via Sydney Student. Due to

ongoing border restrictions, many units of study will be delivered as remote learning (online delivery) during 2021. Please note that remote learning will not affect your visa entitlements.

Please access and make adjustments in the new Timetable system here:  
<https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/timetables.html>

### Course Structure

Depending on whether you are an LLB, JD, or Diploma of Law student, you will be required to obtain necessary credits in LAWS units in order to progress. Please access

your relevant cohort Handbook to consult your degree requirements here: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/handbooks/law/>

To assist with your degree planning, please view sample study plans below:

*Arts/Science LLB (5 years)*

Navigate to a sample Arts/Law study plan below

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/courses/courses/uc/bachelor-of-arts-and-bachelor-of-laws.html>

Please bear in mind that although most Sydney Abroad opportunities

have been suspended due to COVID-19. Should you choose to undertake a semester exchange, this may delay your degree progression. For example, if you are an LLB student within your first 3 (Arts/Science) or 4 (Engineering) years, you are required to complete compulsory units whose progression depends on each other. Should you undertake an exchange semester, as compulsory or 'Priestley 11' subjects cannot be taught by overseas partners, your degree will be delayed and this may adversely impact your visa duration.

## Dalyell Scholars Program

This information pertains to undergraduate combined degree students only. The Dalyell Scholars stream is an enrichment academic and social program for students with an ATAR of 98+ or equivalent. Please note that this program is not a scholarship and its membership is optional.

Enrolment in Dalyell may affect your course planning as combined law students needs to complete:

- 12 Dalyell credits from Table D
- 6 OLE (Online Learning Environment) credits from Table O

These requirements mean that Dalyell stream students will need to complete an extra 6 Dalyell credits alongside

increased tuition fees for such studies. Please note that as per the Sydney Law School's degree resolutions, if you have completed 6 Dalyell credits and then withdraw from Dalyell, you will only be required to complete 6 OLE credits. Please refer to Sydney Law School's course handbook for more information under 'Combined Laws': <https://www.sydney.edu.au/handbooks/law/undergraduate/laws.shtml>

In order to maintain your membership within the Dalyell Program, you will need to achieve a minimum WAM (weighted average mark) of 75. Should you fall below this threshold, your faculty's Dalyell Coordinator will contact you and you may be removed from the program as a result.



# Academic Matters

## Academic Appeals

You may invoke academic appeal when you wish to dispute your final grades. There are three stages in the academic appeal process, they comprise of:



Otherwise known as an informal appeal. Ask the relevant course convener or send a courteous email requesting feedback and a specific breakdown of your final mark. Where necessary, arrange a meeting to seek clarification. They should provide reasons for their assessment of your work.

The Sydney Law School advises that you engage in self-reflection prior to this stage. This involves reviewing assignment comments and/or seeking individual feedback. You have 15 working days from receiving your grades to file an appeal. Should you feel the matter remains unresolved, you may take the appeal further to the relative Associate Dean.

If you are not satisfied with the response from your informal appeal, you have the right to submit a formal appeal in writing to the Law School to [law.appeals@sydney.edu.au](mailto:law.appeals@sydney.edu.au). A formal appeal needs to be lodged within 20 working days from the first stage. Please submit all relevant support documentation/evidence. Find out more at: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/academic-appeals/faculty-academic-panel-appeal.html>

In case a formal response from your Faculty is unsatisfactory, an appeal to the Student Appeals Body (SAB) is the final stage for internal appeals. You have 15 working days from your Faculty's formal response. In your SAB appeal, you should try to identify procedural unfairness or breach of internal policy in the Faculty's academic decision. Find out more about this stage at: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/academic-appeals/sab-appeal.html>

## Simple Extensions

If you cannot submit an assignment on time, you can discuss with your Unit of Study coordinator about your circumstances and apply for a simple extension. It is an informal arrangement between you and the coordinator and you can have an extension of up to two working days. For more information, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/simple-extensions.html>

## Special Considerations

If you require an extension for more than two working days, you need to provide relevant evidence and apply for special consideration. Circumstances for special consideration include acute and/or chronic illness, misadventures such as car accidents, essential commitments such as jury duty, military service or commitments representing the University, state or nation.

Note that travel plans, public transport delays, minor illness, professional or time management issues are insufficient. For more examples of special consideration and required documents, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/special-consideration.html>

## Degree Load and Progression

Generally Student Visa holders need to undertake a full-time study load (24 credit points/semester). Eighteen (18) of these credits must be taken during the main semester outside of Intensive units. However, you may apply to reduce your study load where:

- You have a seriousness illness or injury (including adverse mental health circumstances)
- A close family member has died
- Faculty cannot offer any other units of study due to the structure of your program
- Your Faculty Academic Advisor (AA) recommends you to reduce your study load so that you can complete your remaining units of study
- COVID-19-related special circumstances\*

\*For COVID-19 circumstances, you need to complete a student declaration form outlining how your full-time studies are affected by COVID-19. Disruptive factors may include national lockdowns amongst others. You must also specify the potential duration of this disruption. Please access the form here: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/content/dam/students/documents/admin/student-declaration.docx>

Note that reasons related to finance or work outside your studies are not valid. Receiving credits from previous studies/Summer/Winter School are not valid reasons either, unless your remaining units fall short of 24 credit points.

Please refer to the University website for more information on degree load and progression: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/reduced-study-load.html>

## Change your Course

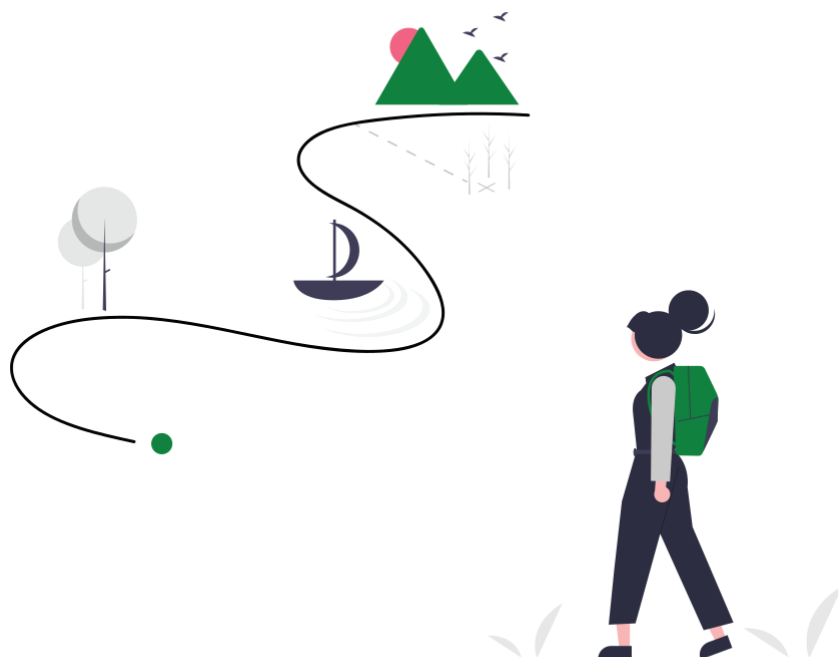
Your faculty may allow you to upgrade or downgrade your course, or transfer from a combined law degree into a single degree. This is called an allowable course transfer. The 2021 application deadline is February 12 for Semester 1, and July 23 for Semester 2. If your application is successful, the University will issue a new electronic Confirmation of Enrollment (eCOE). Please note

that if your new eCOE stipulates a completion date beyond your original degree, you will need to apply for a visa extension.

If you are not eligible for an allowable transfer, you can apply for an internal course transfer. Unlike an allowable course transfer, an internal course transfer treats your application as if you are enrolling for the first time using your high school or degree results, whichever is higher. The application deadline for Semester 1, 2021 has elapsed on January 31, 2021.

If you wish to change from a single to a combined degree, the university will issue a new eCoE. However, should you wish to change to a new curriculum version of your present course, the university is unable to issue a new eCoE which entails that you must complete the transferred course without overstaying your original visa expiry date

You may also change streams but may not receive credits for your previous study. You must consider how a transfer will affect your student visa. For more information please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/change-course.html>.



## Discontinue a Unit of Study

If you discontinue a unit of study before the census date, no academic or financial penalties will apply. However, you need to ensure that you are still fulfilling your visa requirements. There are two types of discontinued units of study:

- DC (Discontinued not to count as failure)
- DF (Discontinue Fail)

If you discontinue a unit of study after the census date but before the DC deadline, you still need to pay for the unit but it will not count as a fail grade on your transcript and thus will not affect your WAM. It is important to note that a DC or DF grade will reduce your study load which means that you will need to apply to reduce your study load in order to comply with your visa requirements.

Please note that intensive and placement units will have differing DC deadlines. The DC deadline for semester-long (S1C and S2C) units for 2021 are:

Semester 1: April 24

Semester 2: October 1

You should always check the specific DC deadline for your unit at: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/discontinue-unit-of-study/unit-of-study-deadlines.html>

For more information on discontinuing a unit of study, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/discontinue-unit-of-study.html>



## Discontinue your Course

If you want to discontinue your course, you should contact University Compliance Officers for advice at: [student.compliance@sydney.edu.au](mailto:student.compliance@sydney.edu.au), and make sure you check the key dates and deadlines (<https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/study-dates.html>) to avoid academic penalty or financial liability.

You need to notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) within 31 days of discontinuing your course. Your eCoE will be cancelled and you need to contact within 28 days to arrange an alternative visa if you wish to stay in Australia.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/discontinue-course.html>

If you discontinue your primary course within its first six months to accept an offer at another institution, you need to request a release and produce an unconditional offer provided by your new institution.

If you are a combined visa student (ie. you progressed from the University of Sydney Foundation Program), your primary course is your degree at The University of Sydney.

For more information, please visit: <https://sydney.edu.au/students/release-for-student-visaholders.html>



## Suspend your Studies

You can only suspend your study if there are compassionate or compelling circumstances beyond your control, such as serious illness/injury, death of a close family member or a traumatic experience. Note that financial reasons or reasons

relating to work outside your studies are not valid. For more information regarding specific compassionate or compelling circumstances and the documents required, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/suspend-studies.html>

## Request special permission for a unit of study

You can apply for a special permission to undertake a unit of study if you do not meet the required prerequisite, or that you wish to overload your credit points in a semester (ie. over 24 credits/semester) , or that you wish to undertake a unit of study out of sequence etc.

that you fulfil all visa requirements prior to submitting a request. In your application, you need to state why you are applying for special permission and provide relevant evidence. For more information, please visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/selecting-units-in-sydney-student/enrolment-exception-requests.html>

This is not particularly difficult to get. Although, you must make sure

# Scholarships

## University-wide Scholarships

International students are eligible for a variety of scholarships. Some are as listed below:



## Sydney International Student Award

This scholarship is awarded on a dual merits- and extracurricular-commitment basis and is open to international students from select countries and regions. Recipients will receive 20% off their fees for the duration of their course. As of 2021, the following countries and nationalities are eligible for this award:

- Bangladesh
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- South Korea
- Sri Lanka
- Vietnam
- Countries within Africa, Central Asia, South and Central America

You will also need to submit a 200-words personal statement addressing:

- Describe yourself
- Your motivation for applying to the University of Sydney
- Your academic and professional aspirations

Please use the link below to find out more about the scholarship:

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/study/study-options/fees-and-loans/sydney-international-student-award.html>

## Vice Chancellor International Scholarships Scheme

This scholarship is awarded purely on academic merit and is open to all commencing international students enrolling in an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. It is open to all international students who have an unconditional offer of admission for a full-time undergraduate or postgraduate coursework program at the University of Sydney. All eligible students will be considered automatically.

Value and Duration:

- Four scholarship amounts may be offered \$40,000 payable for one year in two equal instalments
- \$20,000 payable for one semester
- \$10,000 payable for one semester
- \$5,000 payable for one semester

## Sydney Scholars India Scholarship Program

This scholarship is offered to outstanding students in India commencing an undergraduate or postgraduate coursework course. This program is intended to foster relations and collaborative efforts between the University of Sydney and India - applicants must hold Indian citizenship and be current residents of India (permanent residents of Australia are not eligible).

undergraduate coursework degree up to four years,

- 10 x \$20,000 first-year scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students, or
- 15 x \$10,000 first year scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Please subscribe here to be informed when application for the Sydney Scholars India Scholarship Program will be opened: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/e/sydney-scholars-india-scholarship-program/submit-an-enquiry.html>

A total of 28 scholarships will be awarded annually, consisting of:

- 3 x \$50,000 scholarships for undergraduate students, paid across the duration of any

## Law Scholarships

Available to Both Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students

### Pitt Cobbett Scholarship

Open to applicants enrolled in the JD or undergraduate combined law program at University of Sydney and must demonstrate financial hardship.

For more information and to apply, visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/b/pitt-cobbett-scholarship.html>

Value: Up to \$2500  
Duration: One-off payment  
Opening date: TBC  
Closing date: TBC

### Sydney Law School Exchange Scholarship

Applicants must be enrolled in either the JD or LLB program at the University of Sydney and entering their final year of studies. Applicants must be approved by the Law School to participate in a Law School-specific exchange the following year, be a high achieving student and must demonstrate financial hardship.

For more information on faculty scholarships available to undergraduate students, visit <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/international/bachelors-honours/faculty/law.html>

Value: Up to \$2000  
Duration: One-off payment  
Open: 31 August 2021  
Close: 30 September 2021

For more information on faculty scholarships available to postgraduate students, visit <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/domestic/postgraduate-coursework/faculty/law.html>

For more information on exchange scholarships and how to apply, visit: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/b/sydney-law-school-exchange-scholarship.html>

For information on postgraduate research scholarships, visit <https://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/international/postgraduate-research.html>



# Navigating Covid-19

Navigating law school remotely in a different country can be very daunting - we have both good and bad news for you.

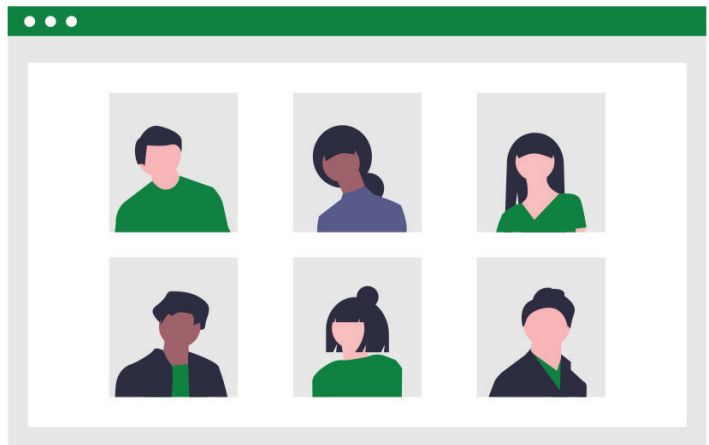
Bad news first: time and mental health management might feel like a fight. You're essentially fighting yourself to become a more organised and motivated person, and you're doing this when everyone from faculty to classmates feels a little out of reach.

This feeling is valid. You're not hallucinating or overreacting if you're feeling a bit let down. It is totally valid to feel like your entire law school life is squeezed into a computer screen, and you're like this lone warrior slogging through endless readings at your desk.

In a nutshell, we are now confronted with the world's uncertainties affecting our everyday experience - this ambient stress then builds on top of existing worries about our WAM and future employment prospects. It also doesn't help when having a social life feels like a luxury and the concept of friendship is starting to look like a Zoom link.

Now the good news: you have precious opportunities unique to where you are. China, Singapore, Canada... no matter where you are based now, you are able to turn your location to your advantage. We know at least 2 JD students in mainland China who have studied for and passed the Chinese National Judicial Examination last year! These are location-specific opportunities your Sydney peers can never dream of!

It is also an excellent time to aim for work-from-home internships and part-time jobs, and have these experiences reflected in your CV to demonstrate your resilience and resourcefulness in taking on challenges against all odds. It doesn't matter if your experience is outside of NSW. Yes, we know you keep hearing this from company HRs, but it's true - you just need the transferable skills, and effectively communicate them on your CV and cover letter.



# CAREER

## Clerkship

In New South Wales, most mid and top tier law firms offer clerkship programs that typically run during the summer between late November and February of next year (some firms offer other seasonal placements). There may be interstate and overseas opportunities, so you would benefit from being open to branch out of Sydney, NSW. Make sure to go to the firm's dedicated clerkship information page on their website to find out more information.

As international students, we come across certain employment barriers when looking for a summer clerkship position. Do not be discouraged. Streamline your application process and apply to the firms that do hire international students, and do your homework to make sure they are firms you actually want to clerk at. Be sure to use your unique experience and diversity as an international student to your advantage in your cover letter.

## Application Process:

- Most firms require your CV and a cover letter
- Some firms have additional questions to be answered on their application
- Some firms require psychometric testing
- Most firms have two rounds of interviews [students whose applications are chosen to proceed to the interview stage]
- If you are asked for a second interview, typically you will be invited to a Cocktail Evening with the firm. This is still part of the application process. You are expected to mingle and make a lasting impression.
- Shortly after the cocktail evening, offers will be made.

## Tips for applying:

- Refine your resume before applications are opened
- Start writing your cover letters before applications are opened.
- Make sure you tailor your cover letters to the firm. Be very specific and make sure they know why you want to clerk for the firm.
- Be genuine!
- If you do not receive an offer for a clerkship, do not worry. Keep an eye out for other options and internships! There are plenty of people who landed positions without having done a clerkship. You will be okay - this is 100% not the end of the world.



## Firms that do consider international student applicants

Firms	Summer Clerkship	Graduate Program	Notes
Allens-Linklaters	Yes	Yes	Students must have the right to work full-time in Australia during the clerkship and graduate programs.
Allen & Overy	Yes	All graduate positions offered to summer clerks	Students must be approved to work in Australia and demonstrate commitment to starting a legal career in Australia.
Baker McKenzie	Yes	Yes	Students must have the right to work full-time in Australia during clerkship period.
Herbert Smith Freehills	Yes	Yes	Students must have unrestricted legal working rights in Australia when commencing clerkship.
King Wood Mallesons	Yes	Yes	Must be approved to work in Australia with the correct visa. KWM does not provide any sponsorship at the clerk or graduate level.
MinterEllison	Yes	Yes	We accept international students who are approved to work in Australia and have the necessary visa.
White & Case	Yes	All graduate positions offered to summer clerks	Students in final year can apply for the 4-week vacation clerkship scheme.
Bird & Bird	Yes	All graduate positions offered to summer clerks	Students with full working rights are eligible to apply. They'll remain with the firm under a new paralegal contract afterwards and be transitioned into our graduate pathway.
Hall & Wilcox	Melbourne ONLY	Yes	International students are required to have full working rights during the clerkship and graduate programs.
Corrs Chambers Westgarth	Yes	Yes	International students are required to have full working rights during the clerkship and graduate programs.
Johnson Winter & Slattery	Yes	Yes	International students with unrestricted working rights are eligible to apply.
Norton Rose Fulbright	Yes	Yes	Students need to have full working rights to work for the duration of their clerkship program in Australia and need to prove this when applying for our programs.
Piper Alderman			Instead of having a traditional clerkship program, Piper Alderman does a yearly intake of law clerks (2 days per week and then stay with the firm until graduation).
Gadens			We do not run a clerkship program. International students are not necessarily excluded from applying, however, they would need to demonstrate knowledge of our national legislation and some experience in the local market is always highly regarded.

## Firms that do NOT consider international student applicants

Firms	Summer Clerkship	Graduate Program	Notes
Ashurst	No	No	Students will need to have at least Australian Permanent Residency at the time of application.
Gilbert + Tobin	No	No	Preferences are given to students who are either Australian citizens or Permanent Residents.
Jones Day	No	No	Do not actively recruit international students.
HWL Ebsworth	No	No	Won't be considering international student applications for 2021 clerkship and/ or graduate program.
Sparke Helmore	-	No	Do not consider international students due to security clearances and the issues that arise out of it.

Firms below are some you may approach individually for their latest hiring policies: Colin Biggers & Paisley, Dentons, PwC Legal, K&L Gates, DLA Piper, Squire Patton Boggs, Wotton + Kearney and Mills Oakley. Clayton Utz requested to be left out of this guide as they are still considering their clerkship approach for this year.



# Tips from your peers



Siqi (Ciki) Chen - JD  
(Graduated 2020)

I clerked at Allen & Overy Sydney office in 2019-2020 and will be working as a graduate with the firm starting from this March. Clerkship opportunities open to international students are very limited in the Australian legal market. My top tip for securing a clerkship position in a commercial law firm is to do a sufficient amount of research and keep your eyes open for every potential opportunity.

You will not want to waste your time on firms who do not consider candidates without citizenship or permanent residency. During the time I was preparing my applications, I created an excel spreadsheet including all firms I was able to apply to, together with their application deadlines, critical information about the firms, and notes I had taken in their information sessions. I found that it was a very organised way to help myself keep everything on track.

Second, make sure that there are no grammar mistakes in your application materials. It is worth investing some money to hire a professional proofreader to ensure that your resume is at least perfect in

English grammar. Third, remember that job hunting is a process of soliciting yourself to the law firms. Do not be too upset if you fail a couple of times. It does not mean that you are not good enough. In most cases, the firms who reject you just think you are not the best fit for their current business needs.

Finally, I have listed several very useful websites below, which I wish I could have known in the earlier stage of my law degree. Some of them relate to the clerkship application tips, and some can help boost your commercial awareness and general knowledge regarding the legal industry:

- <https://www.thecorporatelawacademy.com/training-contract-applications-the-2018-guide/>
- <https://www.chambersstudent.co.uk/>
- <https://www.legal500.com/c/australia/>
- <https://www.iflr1000.com/>
- <https://www.lawyersweekly.com.au/>

Wish you every success in your future applications and endeavours!



Joshua Reisler - JD  
(Graduated 2018)

My experience in securing a clerkship was generally not too different from that of Australian students, except I found it was important for me to indicate to the firms to which I was applying (a) my motivations for pursuing a law degree at the University of Sydney, (b) that I intended to remain and develop my career in Australia after completing my degree, and (c) the value that an international student can bring to a firm.

I also made an effort to research which firms were open to considering applications from international students and which firm might be the best fit for me. In doing so, I attended a number of events hosted by firms and/or SALS where I was able to

chat with HR managers and lawyers. Throughout this process I had great conversations with the people I met from Clayton Utz in particular and found that I wasn't treated differently to Australian candidates.



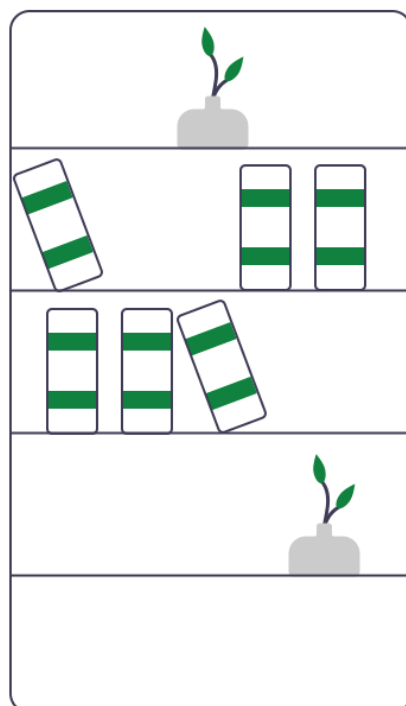


Amy Zhang  
(Domestic Student)  
LLB/ BCom IV

Hi, I'm Amy, a fourth-year law and commerce student. I participated in the Allens Dive-In Program, run virtually across three days in May and June 2020. The program was my first real introduction to Allens. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience because the program was engaging, well-organised and informative. All the sessions were packed with interesting speakers (ranging from graduates to partners), interactive activities and practical tips and advice on how to stand out in applications.

My favourite part was the client interviewing activity that we completed in small groups on the last day. Applying the information I learned about the various practice groups at Allens from the second session, I worked together with other participants as if we were junior lawyers at Allens. Receiving instant feedback on how I performed was very helpful. Not only did I gain practical legal skills required for client interviewing, but this session also helped to consolidate my understanding of the practice groups at Allens and what they offer.

Overall, the program gave me a taste of life in a top-tier Australian commercial law firm. The Dive-in Program demonstrated to me the collegial and supportive culture at Allens. If you are a pre-penultimate student interested in finding out about Allens or commercial law in general, I would highly recommend applying for the program. It equips you with the knowledge and connections to start building your future legal career. The application process includes submitting a resume, academic transcript and a short answer question. Feel free to reach out for a chat!



# Virtual Internship

Virtual Internship is an alternative way to get practical skills and experience from law firms. The Internship is free of charge and usually takes 5-6 hours to complete 3-4 tasks. Some programs might be slightly longer. The programme is entirely self-paced. You are able to find them on Forage: <https://www.theforage.com/>

If you have participated in one of the virtual internships, make sure you comply with the Referencing Policy when including the experience on your CV and LinkedIn. You can include the experience under “Extracurricular Activities” or “Certification” or “Achievement”, but not under “Work Experience”/“Employment” on your CV. Furthermore, Forage suggests the following wording when referring to the experience.

### *Extracurricular Activities*

*[Insert Company Name] Virtual Experience Program Participant*

*[Year of Completion] - [Insert Approximate hours] Participated in the open access [Insert Company Name] Virtual Experience Program with Forage.*

*Tasks Completed include:*

- *Task A*
- *Task B*
- *Task C*

If you want to include the experience on LinkedIn, you can put it in “Licenses & Certifications” and refer yourself as “Virtual Experience Program Participant”.

For more information, feel free to visit:

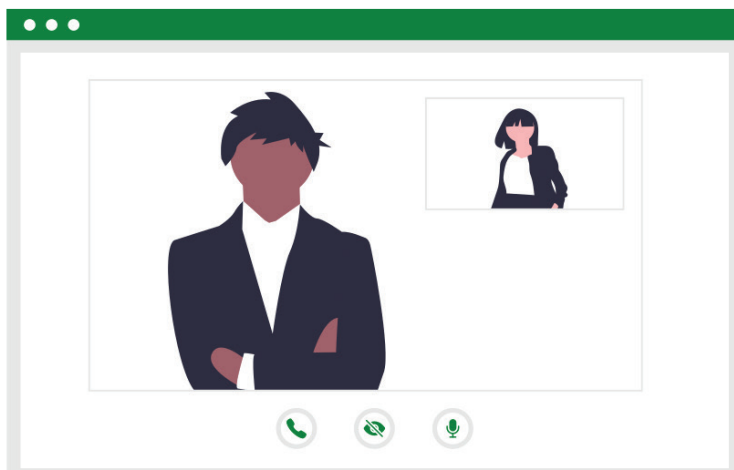
<https://insidesherpa.s3.amazonaws.com/vinternships/companyassets/RGekxZXJpbZtJrQnH/LioLuvXGdTjRPDZiP/ForageReferencingPolicy.pdf>

With that said, a Virtual Internship is still beneficial to students, as

1. You can develop a deep insights into the work of particular law firms
2. Most virtual internships enable you to sample the work of solicitors of the law firms
3. You will be able to include the experience on CV and LinkedIn profile
4. The experience shows that you are ambitious, hardworking and have developed valuable practical skills.
5. Most virtual internships do not have a deadline. You can complete the tasks at your own pace in your busy schedule.
6. You can build confidence and practical skills by completing the tasks.

List of international law firms who are providing virtual internship on Forage:

1. Ashurst
2. Arnold Bloch Leibler
3. Baker Mckenzie
4. Clifford Chance
5. Corrs Chambers Westgarth
6. Hogan Lovells
7. King & Wood Mallesons
8. Latham & Watins
9. Linklaters
10. Matheson
11. Minter Ellison
12. Pinsent Masons
13. Slaughter and May
14. RPC
15. White & Case



# International Employment

## Hong Kong

Each year, many international law students from Australian universities decide to start their career in HK. Why does HK appeal to these young, ambitious future lawyers? How are they going to pursue it? What are the most popular international law firms in HK?

With its geo-political advantages and rich client pool, Hong Kong is often chosen as the Asian headquarter by many big international law firms (e.g. King & Wood Mallesons, Skadden, etc.). Although the recent political unrest seemed to have cast shadows on Hong Kong, the impact is slowly being offset by the newly forged Greater Bay Area initiative.

The Greater Bay Area plan focuses on strengthening the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau tri-regional corporation in areas of infrastructure, technological innovation, and commercial opportunities. This is a direct boost for the HK legal industry that provides key support to the region's trade and finance.

In the meantime, Hong Kong is witnessing an increasing number of Chinese firms as the city emerges as the new center of international arbitration and litigation. Under such a climate, law students educated under a Common Law system are very welcomed by law firms in Hong Kong.

## Pathway

For the purpose of writing this guide, we spoke with a recent graduate who was accepted by a large Hong Kong firm. It is possible to complete your PLT in Sydney, then complete Hong Kong's intensive PCLL (Postgraduate Certificate in Laws program) before formally practising as a solicitor in Hong Kong.

## China

To become a practicing lawyer in China, you are usually required to pass the Chinese National Judicial Examination (NJE), but having foreign legal knowledge and a high level of English proficiency are very valuable qualities. Here are three law firms headquartered in Beijing, the capital of China.

## King & Wood Mallesons

<https://www.kwm.com/en/hk>

### Introduction:

King & Wood Mallesons are widely regarded as one of the most innovative law firms in the world, able to provide distinctive commercial thinking and customer experience. King & Wood Mallesons has more than 2,400 lawyers located in 28 cities around the world.

### Intellectual Property:

KWM's IP team is very suitable for Science & Laws students. Team business mainly involves trademarks, patents, unfair competition, and contract disputes. Generally, in patent cases, lawyers will first send chemical products and biological specimens to an appraisal agency for professional appraisal and then debate based on the agency's appraisal results. This often means that lawyers with a

background in engineering, biology, or science will be highly appreciated in the selection process. Working in the IP team mainly involves document sorting, typesetting, printing, and assisting lawyers to analyze evidence such as pictures and emails.

Corporate, private equity, mergers and acquisitions and commercial affairs:

These practice groups require familiarity with the content of company laws and, in some instances, tax, business, and finance. Common areas include transaction preparation, due diligence, anti-hostile takeovers countermeasures, general corporate compliance, disclosure obligations related to financial products, contracts related to mergers and acquisitions, company restructuring, etc.

<http://www.dachenglaw.com/>

### Introduction:

Dentons does not have a single headquarter and does not have a dominant national culture. Due to different geography, languages and nationalities, it has in-depth exposure to various legal traditions around the world.

### Intellectual Property:

The Intellectual Property team is also one of the strongest teams in Dentons. Dentons is on the list of China's top ten intellectual property litigation agencies. The usual work content of the team's lawyers is similar to that of King & Wood Mallesons. An interesting news is that if you have an intern in this team, you may have to play two computer games for two weeks constantly to find out the same

or different elements, which is super interesting!

### Criminal Law:

Denton's criminal law team provides criminal defence work - a clerk's daily task goes into assisting the lawyers' with documents related to bail, appearances, sentence mitigation. Criminal defence lawyers also serve a key function of ensuring procedural fairness for the defendants. Thus excellent knowledge of both substantive and procedural rules in criminal law would make one stand out in the crowd. Due to the particular nature of criminal cases, it is worth noting that you might often come across graphic evidence such as pictures of deceased persons. So this line of work is more suitable for students who have experience, i.e. having previously clerked in criminal law firms or the prosecutor's office.



<http://www.zhonglun.com/>

### Introduction:

Zhong Lun is one of the top eight law firms in China with 8 overseas offices including Hong Kong, London, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco.

### Securities Department:

This is the department that travels the most. Clerks may travel to four to five provinces in China within three months. Most of their time is not spent in law firms but in project companies. Their main job is to assist securities companies in completing securities company projects.

Securities companies tend to have good employee benefits which often covers a decent allowance for three meals a day.

### International Business:

International business lawyers must pass the Chinese National Judicial Examination, but having an Australian legal qualification certificate is often also necessary. Their IB team requires lawyers to have a high level of English proficiency. Day-to-day work includes pre-deal preliminary research, WTO inquiries, anti-dumping and countervailing cases, and legal translation.

## Part-time Jobs

We understand this is a hot topic on your mind. From our experience, this is where you get to meet the best (and sometimes worst) members of the legal profession.

Keep in mind our Student Visa has a maximum 40 hours per fortnight ceiling during semesters - we cannot work more than this number of hours. In between semesters, we are allowed to work full-time. This means that we are not excluded by law from applying for a summer clerkship program, we are just subject to each firm's hiring preferences.

Some interesting forums you might find helpful to understand the legal profession in Australia:

Reddit Aus Law: <https://www.reddit.com/r/auslaw/>

Reddit Aus Legal: <https://www.reddit.com/r/AusLegal/>

Lawyers Weekly: <https://www.lawyersweekly.com.au/>

The types of work commonly involves document review, drafting, case law research, and other administrative tasks. For the most part, your job would be to assist someone, so the area of law you work in will be closely related to that person's expertise. You'll also get a good glimpse on how a firm/organisation operates. This is where working in a smaller firm shows its advantage, as you get more exposure to understand how to one day run your own practice.

It is also helpful to adjust expectations. In your early years as a law student, your employer understands that you're still learning the basics. So during a job interview, they may ask you about your academic interests and your general career plans. As you progress in your degree, you'll see more interview questions probing about your knowledge in your employer's practice areas, as well as questions about your experience studying a particular subject.

## During Semester

The maximum days you can work per week is roughly 2.5 (presume 8hrs/day). This rules out full-time paralegal positions, as well as some part-time positions (for instance, ANZ) where they need the part-time paralegal to work a minimum 24 hours per week, which is 4 hours more than what we are allowed by law. Please don't overwork - contraventions are serious and will put your Student Visa in danger.

## Between the Semester

This is when a lot of us unwind after final exams, sit down, write up our applications and land that first job. These paralegal positions are commonly advertised as PLT (practice legal training)/law clerk/paralegal/legal assistant. Have a look around:

Indeed: <https://au.indeed.com/>

Seek: <https://www.seek.com.au/>

LinkedIn: <https://au.linkedin.com/>

College of Law: <https://jobs.collaw.com/>

Glassdoor: <https://www.glassdoor.com.au/>

Legal Vitae: <https://legalvitae.com.au/>



## Rights at Work

We want you to put your rights and safety front and centre of your mind. To put simply the advice we received from Sean Stimson (International Student Solicitor, Redfern Legal Centre): should your work days count towards your PLT days, your employer is not legally required to pay you, because your PLT is considered to be part of your vocational training.

This means, in an unpaid PLT situation, if you've accumulated the number of days required for PLT and your employer is still showing no intention in paying you - it is a good time to gently poke them and chat about salary. If you're working as an unpaid paralegal and there has been no mention of PLT, you might want to check with your employer and be clear about expectations up front.

Please don't be afraid to talk about money with your boss. However unsure or nervous you might be, the value you bring to your firm is a lot more than you think. From our experience, if your boss has a shred of professional dignity - they'd agree with us. Big law firms pay their paralegals very generously; barristers chambers have policies mandating assistants

must be paid; good sole practitioners starting out their own practices will also pay their paralegals.

A good measurement of how much you should get paid is the Legal Service Award, find out more at: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/872/legal-services-award-ma000116-pay-guide.pdf.aspx>

You should also be aware that you're entitled to have your employer pay for your Super (Superannuation). Employers are required by law to put 9.5% of your pay into your Super account with your selected fund - there is no excuse for your law firm to not pay for your Super. Note there is also tax - we suggest keeping an eye out for free tax seminars organised by our university career centre and student bodies like SRC and SUPRA.

If you've made up your mind in taking up unpaid work - be sure to ask your employer if any allowance is available for your food and daily travel. We are here if you need advice or if you're simply feeling unsure about how you're being treated at work.

## Workplace Safety

We've heard all kinds of horror stories about scary bosses - no doubt law is a high-pressure area to work in. However, there is a fine line between 'scary' and 'abusive'. Some common issues we've previously been made aware of include: verbal abuse - being shouted at, distasteful sexist jokes, casual racism, being asked to do excessive overtime, relentless work demands over the weekend, bosses with personal boundary issues, unethical handling of vulnerable clients, aggressive clients with boundary issues, and unsupportive bosses telling staff to 'be resilient' instead of offering any useful mental health support...

Workplace safety is a real issue and no amount of self-care or 'mindful yoga' can rescue us out of a toxic environment that relentlessly beats

us down. We recommend doing a thorough background research for any online reviews made by clients and former employees. Sometimes if the employer is notoriously bad, you'll be sure to find their names in lengthy online articles dedicated to explain to you how bad they are.

It is also good to ask around - chances are someone in your cohort has worked for that lawyer/firm. Please also reach out to your SALS International Student Officer, who will be able to help you ask around, should you wish to remain anonymous.

If you wish to share with SALS your experience with a particular employer, please do not hesitate to contact your International Student Officer directly at: [international@sals.org.au](mailto:international@sals.org.au)

# Volunteering

Don't forget you can volunteer at your local community legal centres and other organisations:

- Community Legal Centres NSW: <https://www.clcnsw.org.au/volunteer>
- Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre: <https://www.eeclc.org.au/contact-us/volunteer>
- Inner City Legal Centre: <https://www.iclc.org.au/volunteering/>
- Immigration Advice and Rights Centre: <https://iarc.org.au/support-our-work/volunteers/>
- Marrickville Legal Centre: <https://www.mlc.org.au/get-involved/>
- North and North West Community Legal Centre: <http://www.nnwcls.org.au/>
- Redfern Legal Centre: <https://rlc.org.au/jobs-volunteers>
- South West Sydney Legal Centre: <https://swslc.org.au/contact/work-with-us/>
- Welfare Rights Centre: <https://welfare-rights-centre.org.au/jobs-and-volunteers>
- Western Sydney Community Legal Centre: <https://www.clcnsw.org.au/volunteer>

Other organisations:

- Australian Pro Bono Centre: <https://www.probonocentre.org.au/>
- Binaal Billa Family Violence Legal Prevention Service: <https://www.binaalbilla.com.au/careers/>
- Environmental Defenders Office: <https://www.edo.org.au/volunteer-with-us-2/>
- Justice Action: <https://www.justiceaction.org.au/contact-us/get-involved>
- Justice Connect: <https://justiceconnect.org.au/work-with-us/volunteer/>
- Legal Aid NSW: <https://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/about-us/working-at-legal-aid/practical-legal-training-and-work-placements>
- Public Interest Advocacy Centre: <https://piac.asn.au/about-us/careers/>
- Refugee Advice and Casework Service: <https://www.racs.org.au/volunteers>
- Women's Legal Service: <https://www.wlsnsw.org.au/about-us/volunteer-with-wls-nsw/>
- Unions NSW: <https://www.unionsnsw.org.au/volunteer/>

Some of them only take applications during their recruitment seasons, but don't hesitate to reach out to them and get yourself on their radar with a well-drafted email and your CV.



# SOCIAL LIFE

## Remote Learning

Since the beginning of this pandemic, remote learning became the sole way for many students to study at university. This year, this situation continues for off-shore students and is provided to onshore students as an alternative. Here's some of the pros and cons we have discovered so far to help you make the decision:

### Advantages:

- Saving time and money! You can save a huge amount of time and money on everyday commutes. Some units have also digitised the required textbooks in e-reserve which can sometimes help you save on those pricey textbooks.
- A flexible schedule! With online lectures, you can choose the time that is most suitable for you to listen to them. Additionally, you can participate in your tutorials and seminars from wherever you are, and utilise your other time for work, volunteering, reading, and other commitments.

### Disadvantages:

- Focus and motivation can be a struggle. To do remote learning well requires a high level of self-discipline - you are the only one holding yourself to account!
- Making friends with your classmates might be hard on Zoom.
- Potential time-zone struggles! However note that for assessments, if your time zone falls between 10.00pm and 6.59am Sydney Time, you may be eligible for special arrangements.
- It can be exceptionally frustrating, If you do not have a good internet connection or a reliable VPN (should you need one).

## How you can improve your remote learning experience:

- Find a place with good internet connection. If you are unable to get this at home, consider going to a library or a safe place that has a good internet connection.
- Don't panic if you are disconnected. Try to log in as soon as possible. However, if you are unable to do this or if this occurs during an assessment such as on-call, just let your tutors know as soon as you are able to do so!
- Turning on your camera can make you more focused as there is the added social pressure of staying on task. If you experience anxiety or if your internet connection is unable to support this, ask a friend to keep tabs on you and vice versa so you can keep each other accountable.
- Make sure you participate as though you are in a real classroom. If you find it difficult to speak without accidentally interrupting someone else or you're feeling anxious, consider using the raise hand function on zoom or just sending through your answer or question in the chat function. Most tutors and lecturers will be happy to address those questions as well.
- Answer the questions actively and feel free to ask questions as usual either through unmuting yourself or through the chat function.
- Knowing your classmates through cameras has become the new "normal". While it might feel 'unnatural', the best way forward is to expand the boundaries of your comfort zone and reach out.
- There are PASS sessions available through zoom which can help you get to know some of your classmates during group work!
- Prepare for your on-call as usual and having your answers organized will relieve your stress when answering the questions. Remember to simulate eye contact with your tutor when answering questions you will have to look at the webcam as opposed to their face.
- Don't forget to unmute yourself before talking and similarly remember to exercise caution with the mute button so you don't accidentally interrupt your tutors or anyone on-call.



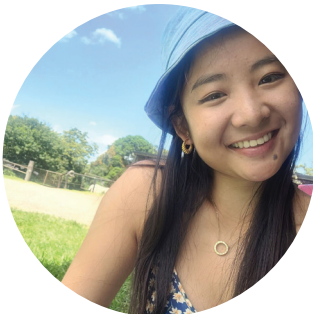
# Tips from your peers



Ilona Ho - LLB II

Although it's important to distinguish remote learning from in-person teaching, there is endless opportunity to make the most out of the remote university experience. As an experiential learner, I found it extremely difficult to transition to online learning as I missed learning collaboratively. What I found helpful however was remembering that I wasn't the only one climbing this learning curve! I got creative and started engaging more with the random facebook messenger groups or attending remote society events to encourage myself to stay attentive in my uni classes.

I found that by balancing my experience and attending things beyond my academics when online, I no longer associated going on zoom or watching videos as a tiring event. I also reached out to my lecturers and coordinators more often to also ease any imposter syndrome I experienced as I found it easier to communicate online since transitioning to remote learning. I'd encourage everyone to allocate time to be on and off your screens as I was challenged by balancing this life and I believe it can only aid our mental and physical health.



Vivienne Davies  
(Domestic Student) - JD II

My best study tip is to be disciplined and show up to all your classes as if you were going to university in person! Although it is so tempting to either skip the Zoom tutorials or have the class on in the background while you're eating breakfast, a lack of mindful presence in the class will ultimately affect your grades.

It is very difficult to remain engaged in class, but I made an effort to participate as much as possible, keep my phone physically out of reach and change out of my PJs every morning before class so I was in the mindset of work instead of relaxation - these little things helped me remain focused.

Studying law remotely can also be extremely isolating as we lack the casual interactions at law school where you could talk about the lectures and clarify legal principles. With the copious law readings, I sometimes felt overwhelmed with information and it wasn't making sense in my head. That's why I found

calling friends to go over study content extremely helpful - not only did I feel less isolated, the process of articulating jumbled thoughts into words can be very enlightening.

If you're new to law school and have only met people virtually, don't be afraid to message someone who you've chatted with in your class over Zoom and ask if they'd like to study together for the subject. Everyone struggles studying remotely, so don't feel like you're in this alone - sometimes all it takes is the initiative to reach out and you could have a new friend to meet up with when you're both back on campus.



Ben Hines  
(Domestic Student) - LLB IV

Whilst I wasn't quite sure what to make of online learning at first, I soon found that once I learnt what worked for me, it wasn't as much of a challenge as people had predicted. Sure, at the beginning the lack of requirements my classes had regarding attendance and participation meant the lectures began to pile up. And yes, I never really did get around to listening to the recordings. It's also true that my first assessment saw me cramming it all the night before in my room. But after that everything picked up! I guess the way to do well when studying online is to find out what is best for you, and find ways to hold yourself accountable.

I discovered that prioritisation was key; when I focused on what was assessable I found myself more motivated to do the work. I also discovered that working with others allowed me to push through the drier content - discussing questions of jurisdiction was always easier after the challenge that was discussing what food to eat for dinner with my friend. When I created these collective learning environments, I found myself staying on top of content a lot better, and the shared experience really brought back the benefits of in person learning for me. As a result, I actually found online learning to be beneficial for me, allowing me to keep the flexibility it afforded without losing some of the other elements of regular class.

## Mental Health Management

*How do I survive law school?* This is the most asked question in this year's International Student Mentoring Program's sign-up sheet. In this section, we will cut down all the cushions and give you the most candid survival stories directly from your seniors:



### Tips from your peers



Haiqing (Hailey) Zhang  
JD III, BA.  
(Econ & Comparative  
Literature)

My mental health journey in law school is quite turbulent. Similar to many non-native speakers with zero background in law, I found the first year of JD intellectually challenging. These challenges were not joyful simulations - I felt intimidated. When I couldn't finish the assigned readings before class, stay focused throughout the lecture, or produce assignments with qualities expected from "a future lawyer", I was compelled to question my capacities and reproach myself for not performing my best. Immersed in these anxieties, I started to blame myself for not being able to handle stress with grace.

Having survived this period of law school, I'd gently advise any incoming law student to stop being too harsh on yourself. Yes, try your best to keep up with the pace of the courses, because trust me, falling behind in law school can induce a high level of mental

stress. However, consider doing so by allocating more time on 1) subjects you found most enjoyable and 2) subjects that confuse you the most. Invest less time on the sleep-depriving hustles over slight improvements for final grades. Most employers don't really care whether you are a distinction or a high distinction so long as you pass some form of cut-off lines. Similar standards should apply when we evaluate our self-worth. Meanwhile, allow yourself to take breaks when your body or brain requests one: eat well, sleep in, go hiking, explore the coastal walks around Sydney with friends during the weekend. These activities have successfully convinced me that even if I'm a law student, I'm simultaneously a human being that deserves to feel restful and recharged from time to time.



Tae Jin (Troy) Lee - JD III, BSc.  
Hon (Pharmacy)

One of the longest longitudinal studies of adult life, the Harvard Study of Adult Development, has demonstrated that the key to healthy aging, both physically and mentally, is relationships. More surprisingly, the study manifested that the role of genetics is far less instrumental to longevity than the degree of satisfaction in relationships, given 40% of one's happiness springs from the choices that one makes in life. As such, the importance of social belonging cannot be overstated in regard to harnessing the power of inner strength. Having true companionship and strong social ties is not only mood-boosting, but also, more crucially, makes one feel balanced and grounded.

However, success in building strong relationships is often dependent upon the principle of quality over quantity. In order to feel truly happy in relationships, it is necessary to focus on and invest your time and efforts in healthy and positive relationships in which one can feel connected, respected and supported. At the same time, maintaining both physical and emotional distance and setting clear boundaries from people who impact you in negative ways is equally significant.

The best way to meet like-minded people you may feel more comfortable with would be attending or partaking in an event or becoming a member of a social group that you have actually wanted or that you are passionate about, instead of what others think you ought. Not everyone is ESFP or ESFJ. It is completely okay for you to be a party pooper and join a chess club or a cooking event instead. Because, that is your



Sissi Xi Chen - JD III, BA. Hon  
(Gender and Cultural Studies)

There's a lot to be said about the bumpy ride that is law school. To open up meaningful conversations about student mental health, we must properly acknowledge the insane amount of pressure we deal with in our daily struggles with uni and work. I currently work two days a week where my other days are filled up by uni. This is not a very sustainable workload and I have no illusion about how much my relationships and social life are suffering because of it. My personal solution for this is to plan ahead and make sure that I communicate expectations with the important people in my life, so they understand - really understand - that my limited availability comes from a place of necessity and not selfishness.

My mental health was really bad last year. It was during peak Covid time and Asian folks like myself were terrified of going out for groceries because some random

true self and where you shine the most.

As highlighted in many literature studies in Australia, one of the most common behaviours among international students is reluctance to seek help. More notably, they can be unaware of or in self-denial of their own mental illness. This alerts the necessity to improve mental health literacy as an early intervention for mental disorders. In fact, mental illness can be manifested into a range of physical symptoms such as appetite loss, insomnia and loss of concentration and interest. Or, sometimes it can be intertwined with physical illness. Thus, mental illness is not easy to feel or recognise as many students may perceive.

Self-awareness is also crucial for students, so that they can track their own physical symptoms or any abnormal changes in their thoughts and lifestyle patterns. Oftentimes, many students might think they have a very clear sense of themselves, but this may not always be the case. So journaling thoughts or having a mood diary as well as recording down and monitoring any physical symptoms can be great ways to improve self-awareness.

Lastly, treating yourself with a sense-related reward after a long week is very important. During the week, your adrenaline is on the rise due to stress accumulated. So at the end of it, you might want to have it decreased with dopamine within 24-48 hours. The reward must be sensual but can be anything ranging from going out for a nice meal, meeting friends, or exploring nature.

person might jump out from nowhere and attack us on the street. I had a friend who was attacked by a swearing stranger, and was pushed down the stairs. Horror stories of Asian people being harassed and spat on flew in on a daily basis... I had days when I couldn't get out of my bed, lying there, knowing my body was starving, but I was so depressed I didn't have the energy to walk downstairs to perhaps pick up a delivery. Going through all of this alone, away from family and friends, thinking I didn't want to trouble anyone and become a burden... was my biggest regret looking back.

This year, our SULTS International Student portfolio has 15 committee members - 15 friends I now wish I had known last year when I hit rock bottom. The entire purpose of this committee is to support our fellow international students. So if you bump into any trouble at uni or at work, shoot us an email - we're here for you.

# Housing

## Find your accommodation

### University-managed accommodation

It is ideal to explore student accommodation options both on and off campus before you make the decision. Comparatively student accommodation on campus would provide an immersive living experience that will allow you to fit in the student community.

Previously there were seven University-run housing options around the main campus. Unfortunately, due to the unprecedented situation of COVID-19, some accommodations that were available are now closed. An update of the list of available accommodations can be found at: <https://usyd.starrezhousing.com/StarRezPortalX/7C3CEFBB/1/1/Home-Welcome-to-the-Unive?UrlToken=308793FE>

Upon application, you may nominate three different preferences chosen from available on-campus locations. In addition, you can submit your living preferences such as the gender of people you would like to live with, special medical needs, and particular dietary requirements.

Social life is the core value of living in a student accommodation.

Neighbourhood meet-up is an excellent way to expand your social network. Residential picnics integrate students into the community. Other accommodation activities such as cardio boxing, tennis competition, and rock climbing are also great ways to meet friends, network, and chill out after intense study sprints.

While people may worry that COVID-19 has transformed student accommodations into risky places, it is worth noting that the University has a comprehensive plan for preventing and mitigating potential spread of the virus. For example, some rooms in Abercrombie Student Accommodation were converted into places for quarantine. In all common areas within University-managed accommodations, there is a sufficient supply of hand sanitizers and sanitary wipes to help you COVIDSafe.



Single room experience in  
Regiment  
Michelle Hu - JD II

I have been living in a single room in the Regiment since 1st January, 2020. It is a really good start to fit into the student community as an international student by moving into an inclusive on-campus accommodation. At the welcome party, I made friends with both domestic students and international students studying different majors and degrees, which dramatically expanded my social network and established my sense of belonging.

There are also various amazing

accommodation activities throughout the whole semester, including climb night, cardio boxing and movie night which give me a break from the busy school life from time to time. The Res-Life Weekly with all the information about these activities is distributed via email, but it is easier to keep updated with the latest information by following the Regiment Facebook page.

Living in a single room in the Regiment keeps me a good balance between social life and privacy. I found my

## Off campus accommodation



Share-house Experience,  
Mri Shankarla - LLB IV

room is surprisingly soundproof. It is an ideal place to sleep, study, and take online exams. I know it sounds silly but don't underestimate how difficult it is to find a quiet place to take your online-exam without interference, or when you are dying to have a good sleep after a deadline.

Living in the Regiment is not perfect. The kitchen is a common area on

the first floor. It will be very difficult to secure a stove to cook at the peak time. Even though you will have a locker in the kitchen, it may not be big enough for all your kitchen items, especially when you have appliances like rice cookers. Air conditioners are only installed in common areas which means summer can be a nightmare.

### Private rental market:

If COVID has had any positive influence for international students, this has been pushing rental prices down across the housing market. Here are some tips in finding off-campus private housing:

- Do not rent a private place without having inspected the premises.
- Don't forget to bargain with your landlord on rents and bills.
- Know your legal rights as a tenant. Several student-oriented resources are available in this respect

Please access search engines below to find a suitable flat or house for you:

Domain housing/rental search engine: <https://www.domain.com.au/>

Share Housing Survival Guide <https://sharehousing.org>

SRC's legal advice for undergraduate students <http://srcusyd.net.au/src-legal-service/>

SUPRA's legal advice for postgraduate students [https://supra.net.au/cpt\\_helps/renting/](https://supra.net.au/cpt_helps/renting/)

I have lived in both on-campus housing (at Queen Mary Building) and in a sharehouse and both experiences have been enjoyable in different ways. On-campus housing was great for my first-year of uni since I got the chance to meet more people. However, after my first year, living in a share-house was more to my taste! The rooms are usually bigger, you get access to a full kitchen with ease, and you share a bathroom with less people (or none if your room is ensuite) for generally more affordable rent.

I have lived and currently live in a sharehouse that is a pretty good mix between being social and friendly while also being able to have your own space. I think it's a good way to become a more self-sufficient person, since I have learned how to balance

work, university, extra-curricular commitments, and taking care of myself as well as my living space.

I would definitely recommend a sharehouse for a cozy home to return to with some lovely people to simulate a home away from home atmosphere! At my current share-house, we usually do weekly dinners together and sometimes catch a trashy reality TV show with a glass of wine! I would caution that it's important to inspect the places physically and to have a good chat with your future prospective housemates so that you are on the same page on what you want from a share-house as there are definitely some dodgy houses or untidy/incompatible housemates out there.

### Religiously-affiliated off-campus accommodation:

These options are often regulated as boarding houses and are associated with a faith. On average, they offer rents significantly below the private student accommodations, however, the trade-off is that they require more community expectations of residents in accordance with their respective ethos.

Name	Location	Rates	Comments
Flo Harris Lodge	Petersham	\$285 - 335/week inclusive of all bills, all meals, and weekly laundering of bed sheets.	Affiliated with the Petersham Baptist Church. However, Flo Harris accepts students of all faiths and none.
Arundel House	Ultimo	\$320 (shared) - 380 (private)/week inclusive of all bills, all meals	Female-students only. Intimate with only 39 students. Associated with St Barnabas's Anglican Church, Broadway. You do not have to be religious to apply.  Residents are expected to contribute approx. 1 hour of rostered chores a week.
Xavier House	Stanmore	Rates are unpublished. However, expect rates to be within the \$200-300 range. Contact Xavier House for more information: <a href="https://www.sydneycatholic.org/directory/listing/xavier-house">https://www.sydneycatholic.org/directory/listing/xavier-house</a>  Rents inclusive of all bills, all meals, wifi and facilities.	Male-students only. Catholic ethos. Small community of 23 students in a heritage mansion in Stanmore. Very close to Stanmore train station and buses.



# International Students Legal Support

As international students embarking on a rigorous course in Australia's largest city, you may find your external pressures as demanding as academic commitments. However, there is a comprehensive range of international student legal support available at both university level and externally at the community legal centres.



## The University of Sydney

### Student's Representative Council (undergraduate)

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is the peak representative body for undergraduate students. It features 35 elected Councillors and student office-bearers who campaign,

engage in student activism, and provide legal support for students in need. The SRC funds two services targeted at students:

### SRC Legal Service

The SRC provide free legal advice, a referral service and representation in court where appropriate, matters that the SRC deals with include:

- Police & court matters
- Traffic, transport offences, and fines
- Immigration law & visas
- Employment law
- Consumer rights
- NCAT (NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal) appeals
- Witness & certification of documents via a Justice of the Peace, etc.

Book a Zoom appointment by calling: 02 9660 5222. Please note that in-person appointments are currently being suspended owing to COVIDSafe restrictions.

Find out more information about the SRC's Legal Service at: <http://srcusyd.net.au/src-legal-service/>

### SRC Caseworkers

The SRC provide a team of Caseworkers who provide free, independent and confidence advice, support across a wide range of issues affecting all students such as:

- Academic rights & institutional appeals
- Special consideration & special arrangements
- HECS & fee refunds
- Academic misconduct & dishonesty allegations
- Show cause & exclusion
- Tenancy & accommodation issues
- Harassment & discrimination
- Financial & tax help (July - October)

Find out more about the SRC's Caseworker service at: <http://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/>

To get involved in off- or on-campus student activism and how to get involved, please visit the SRC at: <http://srcusyd.net.au/get-involved/>

## Sydney University Postgraduate Association (Postgraduate)

Similar to its undergraduate counterpart, SUPRA participates in student activism, advocacy, and offers legal support albeit these infrastructures are focused on

postgraduate students. SUPRA operates two services accessible only by postgraduate students:

### SUPRA Postgraduate Advocacy Service

SUPRA has a team of Caseworkers who provide free, independent advice on practically any issue you might be facing:

- Academic appeals & show Good Cause
- Harassment, discrimination and bullying
- Special consideration & special arrangements
- Research supervision
- Academic progress

- Academic dishonesty and plagiarism
- Fees and finances, etc.

Email them at: [help@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@supra.usyd.edu.au) to book an appointment. Remember to attach any supporting document(s) and detail your issue in your first email.

Please visit SUPRA's Postgraduate Advocacy Service for more details: [https://supra.net.au/cpt\\_helps/postgraduate-advocacy-service/](https://supra.net.au/cpt_helps/postgraduate-advocacy-service/)

### SUPRA Legal Service

SUPRA Legal Service Pty Ltd provides free legal advice, representation in court, and a referral service to postgraduate students who are SUPRA members.

Our solicitors can assist you with a wide range of legal issues, including:

- Administrative law (government etc.)
- Consumer complaints
- Intellectual property
- Institutional disputes
- Credit and debt
- Criminal law
- domestic violence
- employment law
- family law (advice only)

- migration\* advice
- motor vehicle accidents
- victims compensation
- other general complaints

\*Schedule an appointment by sending an email to: [help@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@supra.usyd.edu.au). Specify your problem areas as much as you can and attach supporting documents. Once received, your email will be forwarded to a Solicitor/Registered Migration Agent within 24 hours.

Please visit SUPRA Legal Service's own site to more detail about their offerings: [https://supra.net.au/cpt\\_helps/legal-service/](https://supra.net.au/cpt_helps/legal-service/)

## Off-campus legal support

Outside of The University of Sydney, a number of community legal centres (CLCs) have set up dedicated solicitors who provide specialist advice on issues affecting international students.

### Redfern Legal Centre

Redfern Legal Centre operates an independent legal service specialising in matters concerning international students called the International Student Legal Service NSW. This is an initiative funded by Study NSW, the Fair Work Ombudsman, supported by the City of Sydney, and is available to tertiary students across NSW.

Please fill in this form, describe your problem and Redfern Legal Centre will contact you and book you in for a session with their International Student Solicitor Sean Stimson: <https://redfernlegal.wufoo.com/forms/contact-redfern-legal-centre/>

Alternatively, you can discuss your problem area and book appointments by phone at: 02 9698 7645.



# Queer Support

Regardless of context, international students often face many struggles while pursuing their studies, whether that be securing visas, paying fees, finding part-time jobs, or finding support and friends. LGBT+ international students also face their own unique sets of challenges. Fortunately, so many LGBT+-focused support are here for you. Here is a short sample!

## Sydney Law School

### Sydney University Law Society (SULS) Queer Portfolio

The Queer Portfolio is a unit of SULS that creates and offers a range of LGBT+ events and resources to LGBT+ law students: conferences, the Queer Welfare Handbook, and a Queer Mentoring Programme! Law

students are encouraged to apply to be a part of the Queer Portfolio. For more information, contact Bru, the Queer Officer.

Email: [queer@suls.org.au](mailto:queer@suls.org.au)

## The University of Sydney

### The Queerspace

A hang-out space open to all queer-identifying and questioning students, located in Manning House on campus! Queerspace is also home to QuAC (Queer Action Collective), an autonomous collective for queer-identifying students at the University.

For further information, email the contact below.

Address: G10, Ground Floor of Manning House, University of Sydney

Email: [info@usu.edu.au](mailto:info@usu.edu.au)

### SHADES

A student-run society for LGBT+ students, which organises several social events – online and in person! You can expect game nights, parties, speed-friending events, and movie nights.

<https://www.usu.edu.au/Clubs-Societies/Our-clubs-societies/Just-for-fun/Shades.aspx>

Email: [usydshades@gmail.com](mailto:usydshades@gmail.com)

### Pride Network

A network of LGBT+ staff and students across the entire University of Sydney community. Offers a Canvas page, featuring online events and a blog!

Website: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/about-us/vision-and-values/diversity/pride-network.html>

### Queer Action Collective (QuAC)

A group fighting for queer rights on campus and in the wider community! Meetings are held weekly at the Queerspace, with discussions focusing on how to support the community and achieve political goals.

Website: <https://srcusyd.net.au/student-office-bearers/queer/>

### SUPRA Queer Network

A network for LGBT+ postgraduate students at the University of Sydney! The Network hosts social and chat events. Go check the Facebook page!

Contact the SUPRA Queer Officer at [queer@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:queer@supra.usyd.edu.au).

# Sydney

## Twenty10

An organisation for LGBT+ young people (ages 12-25) offering a hangout space, mental health advice, sexual health service, advocacy, and emergency accommodation for vulnerable LGBT+ youth. Twenty10 also offers inclusivity training and consultation for businesses and organisations.

Address: 37 Shepherd St, Chippendale, NSW 2008 – very close to Broadway, Victoria Park, and, of course, the University of Sydney and Sydney Law School.

Website: <https://www.twenty10.org.au/>

Email: [info@twenty10.org.au](mailto:info@twenty10.org.au)

## Queer Group, Headspace

A group for LGBT+ people (ages 12-25) offering opportunities to hangout with other LGBT+ people, from diverse backgrounds! It is connected to Headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, which offers young people (ages 12-25) health advice, support, and

information. The closest Headspace centre to the Law School is in Camperdown. Address: Level 2, 97 Church Street, Camperdown, NSW 2050 – close to the University of Sydney.

Email: [headspace.camperdown@sydney.edu.au](mailto:headspace.camperdown@sydney.edu.au)

## ACON

A Sydney-based organisation which offers LGBT+ counselling and support, HIV counselling, substance support counselling, and free workshops! Located in the heart of Surry Hills.

Address: 414 Elizabeth St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010

Website: <https://www.acon.org.au/>

Email: [acon@acon.org.au](mailto:acon@acon.org.au)

## The Gender Centre

A non-profit which offers a variety of services for the transgender and gender nonconforming communities: counselling and psychological support, accommodation services, case management services, tenancy support services, rural and regional support, and senior citizens support, among others.

Address: Ground Floor, 41-43 Parramatta Rd, Annandale, NSW 2038

Website: <https://gendercentre.org.au/>

Email: [reception@gendercentre.org.au](mailto:reception@gendercentre.org.au)



# Nationwide

## QLife Australia

QLife Australia is a service that provides a hotline, webchat, and peer support and referral for all people in Australia, eager to discuss sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings, and relationships. QLife is available from 3pm to midnight, every day.

Website: <https://qlife.org.au/>  
Phone number: 1 800 184 527  
General enquiries: <https://qlife.org.au/contact-us>

## National LGBTI Health Alliance

The National LGBTI Health Alliance is an organisation that offers information on a variety of LGBT+ services in Australia, and information regarding ageing and aged care, mental health and suicide prevention, palliative care, and workplace disability and inclusion.

Address: 100 Harris St, WeWork Pyrmont, NSW 2009  
Website: <https://www.lgbtiqhealth.org.au/>  
Phone number: 02 7209 6301  
Email: [info@lgbtiqhealth.org.au](mailto:info@lgbtiqhealth.org.au)

## Organisation Intersex International Australia

This is a not-for-profit company that promotes human rights, health and bodily autonomy. The Organisation offers a variety of services, including advocacy, peer support, workplace and service consulting, custom training and education, and policy development work.

Website: <https://ihra.org.au/>  
Email: Find the contact form at <https://ihra.org.au/about/contact/>



# Exploring Sydney

New to the city? We've put together a guide of the must-visit attractions of our waterside city, rounded up with tips and tricks so you can make the most of your new home.

## Sydney Opera House

The one and only, Sydney Opera House. Stroll along the harbour and take in the magnificent architecture in all its glory for free, or opt for a ticketed-guided tour inside the famous landmark.

Tip: Watch a show! Cabaret, comedy, dance, musicals, opera, ballet - there's something for everyone. If you're ready to splurge, dine at Bennelong for a showcase of Australia's magnificent produce.



## Darling Harbour

Looking for fun activities in the city with harbourside views? A mere 3km walk from the Opera House: Darling Harbour has got it all. The plenitude of dining establishments at Darling Square, Darling Quarter, Cockle Bay wharf and King Street Wharf, 360-degree views of Sydney's skyline atop the Darling Harbour ferris wheel, fascinating museums and The Star Sydney.

When at Darling Harbour:

- Get dessert from the famous Gelato Messina located in Darling Square.
- Check out the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Chinese Garden of Friendship.
- Meet Australia's favourite animals right in the heart of the city at the Wildlife Sydney Zoo or SEALIFE Sydney Aquarium.

TIP: Darling Harbour is a 10-minutes walk from Town Hall Station, and a short stroll from the neighbouring Chinatown, Barangaroo and Pyrmont. You may also catch the light rail or the ferry from Circular Quay and alight at Barangaroo Wharf or Pyrmont Bay Wharf.

## Sydney Harbour Bridge

Do the BrideClimb! Climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge and experience the incredible views of the city (definitely one to cross off the bucket list).



## Sydney Fish Market & Blackwattle Bay

Located at the edge of Blackwattle Bay and next to Wentworth Park in the suburb of Pyrmont, the Sydney Fish Market is only a short distance from the city centre. Seafood lovers will be spoiled by choices with some

of Aussies' favourites like Oysters, Prawns, Marron, Spanner Crab and Barramundi. Enjoy outdoor by the water - beware of the food-stealing seagulls!

## Chinatown & Burwood

Craving Asian food? Head down to Chinatown in Haymarket or straight to Burwood for the best Sichuan restaurants and bubble tea spots in the city.

Tip: Get fresh and hot cream puffs from Emperor's Bakery little shop window, located at the main entrance of Chinatown. If you're craving korean BBQ, check out 678 BBQ, also located in Chinatown.

## Beaches

Sydney = Bondi Beach. Catch the wave at Sydney's most iconic beach. Take instagram-worthy photos at the Bondi Icebergs pool or if you're looking to stretch your legs, try out the Bondi-to-Cooee Coastal Walk.

Still keen to get your beach glow? Hop on the ferry at Circular Quay to Manly Beach or head up north to the Palm Beach, but remember: safety first! Always swim between the red and yellow flags (hello Tort Law) and never outside them (we wouldn't want to end up on an episode of Bondi Rescue).

Tip: Always check the weather conditions - Sydney's weather can change drastically within a very short time frame, Also: sunscreen - bring lots of it!



## Luna Park

As you enter through the wide-eyed and theatrical Luna Park Face, let your inner child out at Sydney's local amusement park as you wander into a world of classic amusement park rides and fair foods. Entry is free, but the rides are ticketed. COVID Update: Luna Park may be closed due to COVID-safety, so be sure to check their website for updates.

Tip: Parking at Luna Park is very expensive. So catch a bus, train, or ferry if you're planning to spend the entire day there.



## Taronga Zoo

Catch a 12-minute ferry ride from the CBD to Australia's largest zoo, located in the suburb of Mosman. Home to the Kangaroos and Koalas with views of the Sydney Harbour, but expect 'Zoo-food' if you're planning to dine there.

Tip: Check for discounted entry tickets on sites like Scoopon and Groupon.



# Exploring the Region

Itching to venture outside the city or planning a roadtrip with your mates? We've put together a list of the most iconic regional destinations in NSW and ACT.

## Blue Mountains, NSW - 1.5 hour drive

The spectacular scenery and breathtaking bushwalks, the Blue Mountains is a must-visit world-heritage destination during your time at Sydney Uni. If you're not planning to spend a relaxing weekend there, you should be able to complete a bushwalk or visit a natural attraction and explore the local town, Katoomba, all within a day trip.

### Attractions:

- Three Sisters - Blue Mountain's iconic landmark unusual rock formation
- Jenolan Caves - Book cave tour tickets ahead of time to avoid disappointment
- Leura Village - East of Katoomba, a charming little town filled with character heritage homes
- Katoomba area - High Tea at the Hydro Majestic Hotel with spectacular views of Megalong Valley
- Scenic World - Scenic Railway, Skyway, Cableway and Walkway - a tourist attraction for amazing views of the Jamison Valley.

## Newcastle, NSW - 2.5 hour drive

Relaxing little harbour city situated in the Hunter Region on the East Coast of NSW and north of Sydney. Go there for the stunning coastline and beaches (especially if you're big on surfing) and quaint-town charm.

### Attractions:

- Macquarie Pier - Watch the large shipping vessels as they leave and enter the the working harbour
- Nobby's Beach - surfers, family goers, and local dolphins. Spot the historic lighthouse!
- Newcastle Civic Theatre - Georgian revival building with rich baroque interior giving it that old hollywood charm. Tickets are not expensive either.
- Fort Scratchley - Former coastal defence, now a museum.
- Merewether Beach - clean and less crowded beach. Grab lunch with the beach view at the Merewether Surfhouse.
- City Hall - Located next to the Civic Theatre, another heritage-listed building.
- King Edward Park - Picnic or a shrimp on the barbie?

## Canberra, ACT - 3.5 hour drive or 3.5 hour bus ride from Central Station

Capital city of Australia and home to Parliament, it's almost our duty as law students to visit the city. Smaller than Sydney, Canberra's an exciting mix of history, university students and politicians, along with a plethora of museums, galleries, wineries, breweries and modern architecture.

### Attractions:

- Australian Parliament House - the heart of Australian parliamentary democracy
- Australian War Memorial - an archive of Australian history
- Old Bus Depot Markets & Kingston - Sunday markets inside an industrial former bus depot located in Kingston
- Telstra Tower - like Sydney's Westpac tower, but Telstra
- Australian National University - spot the law students aspiring to become future politicians

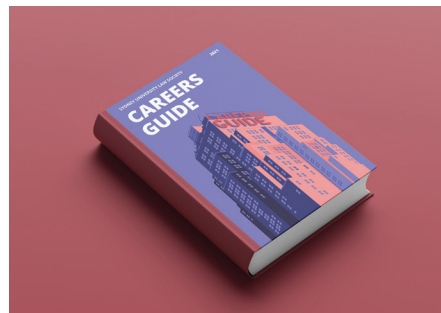


*So, there you have it! Do make sure to look at the Queer Welfare Handbook, published by SULS, for a list of further supports and interviews with LGBT+ lawyers from around the world. The Handbook is available at <https://www.suls.org.au/publications>.*

*As a side note, if you're a vivacious writer, or love to edit, do have a glance at Yemaya, the annual interdisciplinary Journal of Gender and Sexuality published by SULS. You can find all of our latest issues inside the link above. Just maybe - you can contribute to the next issue!*

*From the bottom of our hearts, welcome to Sydney Law School. I wish you an absolutely marvellous start to your degree and year. For those who are currently affected by the border closures, we hope to personally welcome you to the community when you join us!*

## Check out our Guides!



*For more helpful tips on studying, careers and wellbeing, check out our other guides for more content!*

*These guides can be found on our website: [suls.org.au/publications](https://www.suls.org.au/publications)*



**SYDNEY  
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