



Law School Report 2017-2018

LawRight values our strong partnerships with a number of Law Schools – hosting clinical legal education students, collaborating on research and creating pathways for students to volunteer and experience how access to justice works in practice.

This report highlights the extensive contribution of each Law School and LawRight's impact on tomorrow's lawyers.



A. Clinical Legal Education

LawRight hosts 70 students each year who complete a semester of clinical legal education as an undergraduate elective. Students from Griffith University, Bond University, Queensland University of Technology and The University of Queensland attended a LawRight service for a full day of supervised casework, policy and presentations.

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The University of Queensland

Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic ("HPLC") (both semesters)

Students spent half the semester at pro bono partner law firms, attending and supporting volunteer lawyers at the outreach legal clinics, and the other half of the semester with HPLC staff working on research projects, such as submissions to Brisbane City Council and the State Penalties Enforcement Registry on fines and transport issues impacting on our homeless clients; CLE resources for Refugee Civil Law Clinic clients; and research on domestic violence.

Guests or visits from Queenslanders with Disabilities Network, Kelly Sciacca and the Ozcare Men's Hostel, and MinterEllison were valuable. Supervised by Paula Hughes.

Hosted by King and Wood Mallesons, Holding Redlich, Ashurst, MurphySchmidt, Clayton Utz and MinterEllison.

Semester 2, 2017

Brittany Anderson, Luke Borgert, Sasha Gubbins, Laura Kellermeier, Imogen McInnerney, Rebecca Tran.

Semester 1, 2018

Ryan Branch, Larry Fong, Magdeline Hawkins, Teddy Kao, Lucinda Sergiacomi and Joel Townsley.

"I have learnt so much during my time with the HLPC that I would never have been able to learn in a lecture hall! My experience has opened my eyes to aspects of the justice system that are somewhat ignored in mainstream legal education, but that are hugely important. This has been an incredibly valuable experience! I have learnt both practical and research skills that I will use for the rest of my career."

"[My] experience at LawRight in HPLC was rewarding as well as illuminating. As well as gaining practical experience in client interviewing and the drafting of legal correspondence, it was an excellent opportunity to gain further understanding about the work of Community Legal Centres, and the importance of doing volunteer work as a member of the profession."

Health Advocacy Legal Clinic (both semesters)

Two small teams of law, social work and medical students were based at the Mater Hospital, South Brisbane, in the Mater Young Adult Health Centre (MYAHC) for two days a week. A multidisciplinary approach to client care and intergration of a legal response into the hospital system maximised the benefits of a Health Justice Partnership model for clients and students alike.

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Students attended appointments with the supervising lawyer as well as bedside visits, outreach service visits and were immersed in all facets of file management. Students assisted with research into adverse childhood experiences and life-long legal impacts, and into effective safeguards for clients in domestic violence proceedings.

Mater colleagues who generously shared offices, time and expertise include: Kris Tindale, Helen Buckle, Alan Heady, Tatjana Ewais, Anne Hardy, Lisa Cummins, Michelle Daly and Meredith Kenny, MYAHC reception team, Helen Squibb and Greg McGahan. Supervised by Dr Cate Banks.

Dr Banks' paper reflecting on the operation of the HALC model, entitled "*Holistic Care in Action – When health and Law Unite*", has been accepted for publication in the Health Education Journal.

Semester 2, 2017

Ruth Cobbold, Victoria Judd, Radhika Arora, Madeleine Lu Sheen Tang, Chiann Ju Hsiao (Jessica), Riley King, Elena Black, Brianna Toms and Tanya Yovich.

Semester 1, 2018

Maddison Dalla-McIntosh, Paige Donaghy, Larissa Harrison Ji Yen Loh, Rachael Roberts, Sally Vickers, Taylor Thomas and Amanda Wisenthal.

"HALC has given me an understanding of how health conditions can so often intersect with legal issues in people's lives and the value of being able to offer such a service within the hospital setting to people that may not otherwise have access to legal advice."

"My experience in HALC this semester has shown me the importance and value of interdisciplinary approaches to vulnerable clients in the community. Working with social work students encouraged me to think holistically about the clients' legal issues, and broadened my knowledge about what interdisciplinary legal clinics can achieve."

"It was extremely valuable to work within a multi-disciplinary team. Legal theory is extremely fact-based and objective in its application. Working with social work students taught me to approach situations within a broader, sociological framework."

Mental Health Law Practice (both semesters)

Students visited the Princess Alexandra Hospital Mental Health Unit weekly on rotation and completed file work and research tasks at the LawRight office. The MHLP addresses all legal needs of clients with mental illness and refers MHRT advocacy needs.

MHU Senior Social Worker Brian Cargill facilitated the on-site visits. Research tasks included the impact of the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Childhood Sexual Abuse in relation to clients and the intersection of adverse childhood experiences and legal need.

Former student Harriet O'Hare and Associate to Justice Flanagan organised our visit to the Mental Health Court. Supervised by Dr Cate Banks.

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Semester 2, 2017

Harriet O'Hare, Madeleine Forster, Joe Kneipp, Ji Joo, Amelia Nolan and Ashleigh McInnes.

Semester 1, 2018

Slaiman Akl, Rachel Long Yan Chan, Benjamin Gibbons and Michael Hogan.

"...MHLP exposed me to a variety of scenarios that have taught me skills and abilities that I would never have had the opportunity to be taught through mere theory learning at university...my appreciation for access to justice has greatly broadened, and my passion to help those less fortunate has greatly risen. 'Empathetic lawyering' is a concept that I didn't truly understand when taught to us, however, through clinic I feel like I have witnessed and practised it myself, which has encouraged me to adopt it in my future work as a lawyer."

"...an eye-opening experience of discovering the legal and social struggles for people with disabilities, and their vulnerability to abuse which I was previously unaware of. It made me realise the important role of community legal centres."

"...when clients come to LawRight for help, if we are to help them in every way we can and to the best of our ability it is imperative that we are meticulous and diligent in the work we carry out for them. These people are not lesser or less deserving of high quality legal service and access to justice merely because they are unable to afford private aid."

"Living a sheltered life and having a solely theoretical experience of the law has made me become somewhat disassociated from people who are struggling and in need of assistance, and who are unable to seek that assistance. For these people, pro bono centres like LawRight and people like Cate Banks are the only chance they have to get back on their feet and out of the rut they have found themselves in"

A2J and Innovation Clinic (both semesters)

Students worked with a technology platform to develop an online guided interview to produce court documents for self-represented litigants. They learned about digital disruption to the profession, the "digital divide" and ways in which technology may increase access to justice. They also learned about design thinking as a means of developing innovative solutions, team work and project management.

Students observed unpaid wages hearings in the Federal Circuit Court and client appointments in LawRight's Federal Court Self Representation Service. Guests included Judge Vasta and Registrar Belcher of the Federal Circuit Court, employment lawyers from Clayton Utz, the Fair Work Ombudsman and UQ Idea Hub. Supervised by Andrea Perry-Petersen.

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Semester 2, 2017

Kristian Wan, Jessica Fuller, Sarah Hamid, Michael Lacey, Kate Finney, Simon Lamb.

Semester 1, 2018

Amara Motala, Sacha Robinson, Joshua Ling, Madina Mohmood, Kathleen Moy.

“...access to justice affects a significant portion of society and includes barriers such as a lack of access to advanced technology or even a reduced ability to comprehend and interpret legalese.”

“We have been forced to take a step back from formal legal writing and thinking and instead take a client centred approach to create a product that will genuinely improve their access to justice.”

“Exploring practical applications of law within society, particularly in relation to marginalised groups, contrasts with the largely theoretical approach undertaken within our formal university studies.”

Queensland University of Technology

Access to Justice Clinic Semester 2, 2017

Students assisted the Referrals service to assess applications for pro bono assistance, draft referral emails and prepare briefs. The areas of law were diverse and included issues of elder abuse, property law, discrimination and not-for-profit law. The students attended seminars with the Homeless Persons Legal Service, the Mental Health Law Practice and at Clayton Utz. Supervised by Andrea Perry-Petersen.

Sri Lakshmi Unnikrisnnan, Tiffany Kong, Sean Pascoe, Anastasia Stoenko, Rebecca Casanovas.

“This experience exposed me to the many different ways a lawyer can contribute to their community”.

Litigation Clinic Semester 1, 2018

Students supported the Self Representation Service with litigation matters in migration matters, unpaid wages claims, complex estate disputes. They also assisted with a property ownership dispute which, if a positive result is achieved, is likely to result in a client remaining in his home and avoiding homelessness. Students benefitted from guest presentations from Tony Woodyatt, former director of LawRight; Stafford Shepherd, Ethics Solicitor QLS; and Angela Rae, Barrister-at-law. Supervised by Rose Mackay and Andrea Perry-Petersen.

Deekshita Ardham, Austyn Campbell, Madeleine Depace, Orchi Sarker, Annalise Spurge, Conor Stensness and Lewis Tracy.

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QUT created two videos of students' experience at the Self Representation Service:

<https://qutlawschool.edublogs.org/2018/05/28/llb463-legal-clinic-lawright-semester-1-2018/>



“LawRight has allowed me investigate matters involving clients with more individualistic problems that can directly affect their wellbeing and quality of life. I have met inspiring employees at LawRight who have taught me more about the law and the need for community lawyering in our society”.

Griffith University

Social Justice Lawyering Semester 1, 2018

As our longest running student clinic, students assisted LawRight with applications for pro bono legal assistance received by Pro Bono Connect. With the support of Supreme Court staff, this clinic operates at the State Courts building.

Students undertook case assessments, and assisted with correspondence and referral briefs to firms and barristers. Matters varied from week to week and included discrimination, elder abuse, property and not-for-profit law. Peer presentations on legal and policy issues and guest speakers, including Matt Jones about life at the bar and Georgina Porter from Minter Ellison about working in a law firm and pro bono, made this clinic an overwhelmingly positive experience. Supervised by Rochelle Carey and Rose Mackay.

Dalila Allen, Michelle Gunawan, Leesa Matthews, Amaren Mootoosamy, Shelley Whyte and Anthea Wood.

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“Best thing about the clinic – Having the opportunity to look at real circumstances, applicants and being around people working in the profession. It was interesting seeing the range of applications and facts. It was an eye opening experience, both in the breadth of pro bono work and in nature of your own personal bias or presumptions.”

“I would rate my clinical experience with LawRight 10 out of 10. This experience has allowed me to explore varying areas of the law and appreciate the importance of pro bono assistance. The experience has garnered my interest in advocating access to justice particularly for applicants who are vulnerable and disadvantaged.”

“I always left with a lot of questions about topics I may not usually think about and this opened my mind.”

[The best thing about the clinic was] “The reward of knowing that the work you are doing is going towards a great cause of helping someone who is truly in need. Secondly, the knowledge developed and the mentors who I worked with.”

Bond University

Litigation Clinic Semester 3, 2017

Students assisted the Self Representation Service with litigation matters by preparing client & case summaries, drafting letters, phoning clients to investigate matters and reach opinions on options and prospects. Students shadowed solicitors in client interviews and watched court proceedings.

Students prepared a diagram of how court proceedings flow – in versions for clients and for volunteer solicitors to use when speaking to clients.

Students had a tour of the QEII Courts Building including seeing inside jury rooms, thanks to the Supreme Court Library staff. Students benefitted from guest presentations from Matthew Jones, Barrister-at-law and Tim Baumann of MurphySchmidt. Supervised by Karen Dyhrberg.

Kelly Abrahams, Rikisha Brown, Michael Dagg, Fengshu Gao, Shanelle Kennedy, Alexandra Marlborough, Vineeta Sethi, Manuel Soares.

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B. Research and Collaborations

The University of Queensland hosts two research projects which involve LawRight collaboration:

- **Criminalisation of Poverty**

Professor Tamara Walsh leads a three year Australian Research Council Linkage Project on the criminalisation of poverty. HPLC staff consult to the project and the HPLC student clinic will be gathering qualitative data and conducting interviews in the next 6 months.

- **Access to Justice: Technology, Innovation and Sustainability**

Associate Professor Dr Francesca Bartlett, and other University of Queensland researchers are undertaking a year long applied research project with funding from the Australian Institute for Business and Economics. The aim is to test the efficiency and sustainability of online applications to deliver consumer legal information and access to justice. Clients and lawyers' use of an online guided interview in the Federal Court Self Representation Service will be observed and the Service is also providing background information to assist with the research.

LawRight is a member of The University of Queensland's Pro Bono Centre Board.

In April, along with approximately 30 other clinical legal educators, Andrea Perry-Petersen attended a Symposium at the University of NSW namely "Clinical Legal Education in an Agile Learning Environment". Andrea presented on "Software, Students and Self-Represented Litigants" and one of her students participated over zoom as part of the session.



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C. Volunteer Pathways

Service volunteers

71 students from six law schools volunteer, typically for a day per week, at LawRight services. These students exemplify the spirit of pro bono. As well as gaining invaluable client and casework experience, volunteer students assist with the Queensland Legal Walk, administer client surveys and support LawRight communications. We are grateful to all of them and a few gained employment with LawRight. An impressive cohort of volunteers supports the MHLP Advocacy Service, showcased below.

PBC/SRS volunteer students

UQ

Nick Waight
Lilly Burgess
Luke Besse
Natalie Stoll
Tilishia Moodley
Liam Hickey
Priam Rangiah
Jacob Schuurmans
Stephanie Irvine
Larissa Harrison
Robyn Schermer
Leonie Look
Jayana Kerr
Loretta Benson
Ashlea McKenzie

Mi (Julie) Kim
Robert Natanek
Hayley Feakes
Kira Larwill

QUT

Charlotte Tully
Milyka McCutcheon
Kathryn Lukin
Patrick Johnson
Mitch Sorenson
Meagan Liu
Isabelle MacNicol
Kerryn Adams
Oliver Hackney
Emma Williams

Elizabeth Furafo Kurt
McDonald
Justine Singh
Kathryn Lukin
Katina Leedie

Bond

Rikisha Brown

Griffith

Aaron Harris

University of Ottawa

Christina Emberley

HPLC volunteer students

Rachel Tomassen (UQ), Amanda Lamb (UQ), and Bryan Lee (UQ)

HALC volunteer students

Edwina Sully (UQ), Ashleigh McInnes (UQ)

Cairns student volunteers

Kulasumb Kalinoe (JCU), Natalie Woods (JCU), Kate Brunger (JCU), Joel Johnson (QUT)

General administration support

Bryan Lee (UQ)

MHLP Advocacy Service

26 students from four law schools volunteered with the Advocacy Service which assists clients at hearings in the Mental Health Review Tribunal. Students prepare for and attend hearings with clients and assist with the operation of the Mental Health Law Practice. Over the last 11 months, students attended 83 MHRT hearings, requiring an average 6-7 hours per hearing. They are supervised by Amanda Bosworth.

Bond Law School placed one student per trimester with the MHLP.

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“I found the advocacy service to be beneficial to my legal career. Through the service I was able to develop my speaking and interviewing skills further. It also gave me lots of confidence. Additionally I also got the satisfaction to give access to justice to a vulnerable section of our community”.

“I have always wanted to use my knowledge of the law to positively impact those around me. Volunteering at LawRight has given me invaluable insight into how we, as a community, need to continue to seek and provide better access to justice for those who need it the most. Importantly, these experiences have allowed me to interact with and learn from people from all walks of life. For that, I am eternally grateful.”

Advocacy Service student volunteers

UQ

Aaron Hua
Amelia Bell
Amelia Nolan
Cecelia Redfern
Emily Gorse
Georgina Papworth
Kai Nash
Kira Larwill
Loretta Benson
Megan Applegarth

Molly Thomas
Nicole Gillard
Rebecca Bellamy
Robyn Dawe
Ryan Chan
Saibal Kar

Bond

Ada Sculthorp
Sally Crane
Vinay Veerabhadra

QUT

Adam Marsh
Alice Nagel
Anne Hewson
Kris Karan
Zane Jhetam

USQ

David Rawnsley
Sabina Crewes

MHLP office student volunteers

USQ

Sabina Crewes

QUT

Kris Karan
Olivia Jackson
Clara Huang

UQ

Saibal Kar
Aaron Hua
Georgina Papworth
Nicole Gillard

Bond

Vinay Veerabhadra
Virginia Moynihan-
Placement
Kiarra David – Placement