

CLAIRE DE KOYER

LAW/COMMERCE (ACCOUNTING)

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Senior School Subjects

- Year 11 – English, Legal Studies, Accounting, Chemistry, Mathematical Methods Units 3 + 4 Early Advancement, Religion and Society Units 3 + 4 Early Advancement
- Year 12 – English, Literature, Legal Studies, Politics, Accounting



Why did you choose these subjects? In Year 11 I had my heart set on going into the medical field, ultimately to study Medicine. Whilst this was a dream job of mine as a 15/16 year old, it didn't play to my strengths and ultimately I accepted it probably wasn't the job for me. (I haven't yet regretted making that decision!!)

I loved Legal Studies from my first taste of it in Year 10 and decided humanities were my strength, so too English. Dealing with words rather than numbers seemed to work better for me. And so after a last minute change of heart I changed my subjects and haven't looked back. I decided I wanted to study law which would require a good grade and the best way to achieve that was by taking the subjects that I both enjoyed and I was good at, which happened to come with the best teachers, and ultimately it worked out for me

What resources did you use to choose subjects? For me talking to people was the best way to navigate the minefield that is choosing subjects. People that have been there before are the best resource base you could ask for. They can speak from experience, will be able to tell you what a subject is like, and what you can expect from it. The College Career Adviser and senior teachers are also invaluable resources – talk to them, that's what they are there for. I would also say go with your strengths – you know what you are good at and what you are therefore most likely to enjoy.

What was your course like? My course, a Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) was great, though I appreciate not for everyone. It was challenging and extremely time consuming, but it was in the challenge that I found enjoyment. Learning law at university only really scrapes the surface of the field and now that I am practising law I realise how much more I have to learn. My course equipped me with the skills to learn and being able to find the answers.

What did you love about your course? I was continually being challenged and stretched. It took me to China and across the continent of Europe. I met people from diverse backgrounds with diverse interests and different ways of viewing the world, the law, and the role of lawyers in society. Whilst I decided to go into private practice at a large international law firm, it opened up many other options and there were many and varied avenues available to me, and they are doors that have and will always remain open. Just because you study law or accounting doesn't mean you have to be a lawyer or an accountant.

How did the subjects at school prepare you for your course? They gave me a taste of the areas of study I was headed for – particularly Legal Studies and Accounting. English taught me to think critically and carefully use words – skills that are essentially for being a lawyer. They also inspired me to work hard. I liked what I did and I liked the teachers who were there to help and guide us. I found that if you show a teacher you are eager to succeed, they will go above and beyond to make it happen, and this extends beyond school, to both university and into the corporate world. That said, university is very different to how school operates and you have to be prepared to self lead, work independently and be self motivated.

What advice can you offer students considering studying this course?

- **Work experience** is essential in any area. The legal industry is extremely competitive and graduate jobs are highly sought after with a large number of applicants for few places. When I was going for graduate positions the experience I had obtained in a boutique law firm throughout my degree was highly regarded and well received by prospective employers. Get experience early, it will also help you decide whether it is really what you want to do
- **Work hard** – grades matter in the legal industry.
- **Take on extra curricular opportunities** – study tours, study abroad opportunities, volunteering positions, and community involvement. And do it from early on in your degree. These additional experiences will help you stand out in a sea of applicants.

What are you doing now in your graduate position? I now work as a graduate lawyer in a global law firm in their Melbourne office. I have just finished my rotation through the Banking Team and am about to start in the Corporate (Health, Pharmaceuticals and Aged Care) Team.

What do you love about your job? Every day I do something different. The law is such a complex, extensive and dynamic profession and every day I learn something new. I work with extremely bright, driven people who are willing to help and share their knowledge. The firm I work for has many other opportunities for training, growth, professional development, extra curricular activities and ways to do something more than practice corporate law – such as pro bono work, sporting teams, social activities and community service work

Course information: Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Laws, Deakin University, <http://bit.ly/1lgPpJg>