

Kayla Laird, Certificate III in Business Administration (Legal)



As a child I grew up knowing I wanted, somewhere along the way, to be involved in the legal system. Most of my childhood was filled with dreams of becoming a police woman (like in criminal minds...). Little did I know then, that joining the police force is not the only way to become involved in the legal system.

As I became older I realized how many different avenues there are to work in the law industry and trust me there are a lot. I cannot tell you how many hours I spent researching the careers available in law; including forensics, criminal anthropology, barrister, solicitor, Australian Secret Intelligent Service and the list goes on.

This may have been the reason for me studying a variety of different subjects in Year 12, which stretched from Japanese to Legal Studies to Chemistry and Biology (I know- quite a variety). However being me, I knew what I wanted, and that was to somehow get a job in law, one way or another.

When I finished Year 12 I was really passionate about studying law at university but I had decided to have a gap year to help me decide what I wanted to do and where I wanted to go, so I applied through ATEL for a one year Law Clerk Traineeship at a local law firm. I got offered the job at Albury Legal and Accounting and it has been an

amazing opportunity, one in which I would gladly recommend to anyone.

Albury Legal is a small law firm, of only one solicitor who also doubles as an accountant, and we deal with a variety of different legal work. This includes criminal law, civil law, conveyancing and property law, commercial disputes, wills, probate, estates, tax and superannuation law and general law work.

Working in such a small firm gives me a greater opportunity to be more hands on and involved in certain tasks and also dealing directly with clients, barristers, solicitors and many other people associated with our firm. Although there are the basic duties as a receptionist, such as dealing with clients, booking appointments, answering the phone, filing, collecting and sorting the mail, writing letters and invoices and simple cleaning jobs there are many more tasks that have allowed me to get a glimpse of how the legal system operates and what it will be like to work in later on in my life.

In the short time I have worked at Albury Legal as a trainee, I have been given the opportunity to go to court with our solicitor, create contracts for the sale of properties, organise settlements, write up a variety of court documents including witness statements and affidavits, work closely with other law firms all over Victoria and New South Wales and perform many other tasks which I would not have otherwise been given the opportunity to do.

Because Albury Legal deals with such different areas of law, every day brings something different and new, which means there is hardly any repetitive work and a lot to learn. Working at Albury Legal has given me the opportunity to see firsthand the different processes and operations in law and as I have learned, everything is not so straight forward. At times, it is challenging, having to get my head around a lot of the complicated court

processes, large variety of legal terms and different court documents, however, everyone around me is very supportive and willing to help me no matter what the problem is.

Although I initially applied for the position at Albury Legal because I wanted to work closely in the legal system, Albury Legal also has an associated accounting business, Albury Accounting, which means that along with the legal tasks I also am able to perform tasks in the accounting business too. This includes creating tax returns and organising for superfund audits.

Not only am I working at Albury Legal as a full time law clerk and secretary, but I am also undertaking a course at Wodonga Tafe to get my Certificate III in Business Administration (Legal). This course is only offered to people who are undertaking a traineeship in the law industry and can help provide for different job opportunities for people who wish to pursue a career as a legal receptionist or secretary in the future. I am hoping with this certificate that when I move to Melbourne to go to university it will help me get a job while I am living there.

At the end of year 12 I applied to a variety of different universities and a variety of different courses. And at the start of this year when all the offers came out, I got offered my number 1 choice at Deakin University in Burwood to study the double degree- Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Criminology. I am hoping in the future to become a criminal barrister, whether that is in Melbourne or some other place around the country.

This traineeship has already given me a window into what it is like to work in the law industry, and I am delighted to say that I am excited to start a career in the law industry. I would gladly recommend to anyone to undertake a traineeship as you can learn so much in your chosen industry and it is a fantastic opportunity given the chance.