



GRADUATION: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

To practise law in Queensland you are legally required to be admitted onto the Roll of Lawyers by the Supreme Court of Queensland. Graduates wishing to be admitted must undertake additional legal training through either the successful completion of a practical legal training (PLT) course or Bar Practice Course, and/or by serving as a supervised trainee. Once admitted you will be required to apply for a practising certificate from Queensland Law Society to practise as a solicitor, or the Bar Association of Queensland to practise as a barrister.

PRACTICAL LEGAL TRAINING

The most popular method of satisfying the admission criteria is undertaking a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice known as Practical Legal Training (PLT). PLT is designed to equip you with practical skills such as, legal writing and drafting, advocacy and interview skills, and legal ethics among others, required for entry into legal practice.

PLT PROVIDERS IN QUEENSLAND

- **Bond University**
- **College of Law**
- **Leo Cussen**
- **QUT**

SUPERVISED TRAINEESHIP/ARTICLES

Supervised traineeships cover the core competencies set by the Supreme Court (Legal Practitioner Admission) Amendment Rule (No 2) 2005 required for admission. Traineeships are conducted in the workplace and are structured to ensure that you receive adequate supervision and assessment. It takes approximately 12 months to complete and is a popular method of admission for those seeking future employment in the state's top tier law firms.

ADMISSION AS A SOLICITOR

The Supreme Court of Queensland is responsible for admittance to the Roll of Lawyers and is assisted by the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board, which issues an applicant's certificate of compliance. To be eligible for admission, you must have completed an approved law degree, an approved practical legal training course or supervised traineeship at a firm, and be able to satisfy the Admission Board and the Court of your fitness to practise.

PRACTISING CERTIFICATES

A practising certificate is required to practise as a solicitor in Queensland. Certificates are issued by Queensland Law Society and must be renewed annually. You can apply for full membership and your practising certificate at any time, providing you are admitted to the Roll of Lawyers by the Supreme Court of Queensland.

For more information on Admissions and Practising Certificates visit qls.com.au and click on 'Practising Law in Queensland'.

Barristers are also required to hold a practising certificate, which is issued by the Bar Association of Queensland.

Visit qldbar.asn.au for more information on how to become a barrister.

LEGAL CAREER: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

What are your career options when you graduate? You can work as a solicitor in a law firm, as in-house counsel or as a barrister. Opportunities also exist to work with the community, in government or in fields that focus on justice. Some may require a combined degree or further training.

SOLICITOR IN A LEGAL FIRM

Description

Much of your time will be spent meeting with clients, researching cases and writing legal documents. As well as being able to communicate with clients and develop good working relationships, solicitors need to be able to work closely with colleagues, pay close attention to detail and be willing to work long hours. Other key traits include initiative and good judgement, which will assist in working with complex legal information.

Large firms will often recruit in a co-ordinated campaign once per year, while small firms will recruit as positions become available.

Career path

- Employee solicitor
- Associate
- Senior Associate
- Partner or Special Counsel

Practising certificate

Yes

IN-HOUSE COUNSEL

Description

As in-house counsel, you will often be an integral part of the management team and directly involved in decision making. Usually, the in-house legal team takes responsibility of all commercial matters on behalf of the organisation.

Corporate positions are considered attractive because they do not have the personal budget pressures (and timesheets) that private law firms have. These jobs can lead to management positions.

Career path

- Vast experience in the legal profession
- Move in-house after having practised at a law firm

Where can you work

- Large corporations
- Medium sized entities
- Industries: mining, energy, aged care, media, telecommunications, transport, construction and engineering

Practising certificate

Yes

SOLICITOR IN GOVERNMENT

Description

Countless government departments at federal, state and local levels have in-house legal departments. Working in government you'll be tasked with researching, writing and assisting in the implementation of procedural activities carried out by the departments. You may be responsible for constitutional, administrative and regulatory law issues. There have been many lawyers who have become local, state and federal parliamentarians.

Government obviously provides some relief from personal budget pressures and generally, has substantive benefits with regard to workplace flexibility.

Career path

- Departmental Legal Team
- Policy Officer

Where can you work

- Federal and state government
- Local council
- Regulatory, military and statutory authorities

Practising certificate

Recommended – optional but highly recommended to protect legal professional privilege

IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Description

Community legal and pro bono professionals provide less fortunate members of the public who are experiencing trouble with the law and are unable to afford the full cost of engaging a solicitor, with access to the legal justice system. Work in this capacity can offer a rewarding dimension to your career and offer the opportunity to develop strong relationships within the community. You will offer free legal advice, referral and support on issues involving the police, landlords, employers, family and human rights. In addition, you will also work to increase community understanding of legal rights by providing community groups and individuals with legal education and information.

Career path

- Devote a portion of time to pro bono work while in private practice, or
- Become a full-time community legal practitioner

Where can you work

- Private law firms offering pro bono programs
- Community legal centres
- LawRight
- Legal Aid Queensland

Practising certificate

Yes

BARRISTER – INDEPENDENT LEGAL COUNSEL

Description

As a barrister you will play a vital role in the administration of justice and in the functioning of the legal profession. You will be an advocate before courts and tribunals and a consultant legal advisor. You will be an expert on the rules of evidence and court procedure, in determining the appropriate method and argument for presentation in court, in questioning and cross examining witnesses, and negotiating settlements to discontinue legal proceedings.

Visit qldbar.asn.au for academic and admission requirements.

Career path

- Barristers are independent legal counsel
- Becoming a judge

Where can you work

- Mostly in Brisbane and SEQ
- Townsville
- Rockhampton
- Cairns
- Toowoomba
- Mackay

Practising certificate

Yes

WANT TO PRACTISE OVERSEAS?

Australian qualified lawyers can practise in other jurisdictions provided they comply with the necessary rules and requirements of the foreign jurisdiction in which they want to practise. Some examples of the most common jurisdictions Australian lawyers seek to practise in are:

Canada	flsc.ca
England and Wales	lawsociety.org.uk
Hong Kong	hklawsoc.org.hk
New Zealand	lawsociety.org.nz
Singapore	sile.edu.sg

WORKING FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

There are specialised agencies such as the UNESCO, FAO, ILO, IMF and funds such as UNDP, UNICEF and EFP, which offer graduate lawyers various opportunities. For more information, visit the individual organisations.

United Nations:

The United Nations offers several opportunities for graduate legal professionals:

- Internship and volunteer programmes:
Internship (careers.un.org > Internship programme) and volunteering (careers.un.org > Volunteer programme) options available at the United Nations give the opportunity to experience its day-to-day working life, which is ideal for those interested in diplomacy, public policy and international relations.
- Young Professionals Programme:
(careers.un.org > Young professionals programme)
The Young Professionals Programme (YPP) offers new and early career professionals of advanced academic standing to sit an annual entrance examination open to citizens of participating countries published annually, which varies each year.

International Criminal Court:

The International Criminal Court (ICC) provides the opportunity for legal professionals to apply for ICC staff positions. These can be accessed on its website – icc-cpi.int > Get involved > Legal professionals and icc-cpi.int/jobs.