

UNISC LSA

2024

HOW TO
SURVIVE
YOUR FIRST
YEAR OF UNI

First Years Guide



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LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF



Welcome to Uni

Greetings and a warm welcome to the bright community of the University of the Sunshine Coast Law Students' Association!

I am Vienna Mitchell, thrilled to be your President for 2024. Our website is the go-to place for all things LSA, it is where you will find essential information about the association, key academic dates, membership details, and exclusive links to major events and sponsorship opportunities.

Since our formation in 2014, the LSA has stood as the pinnacle representative body for law students at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Our dedicated committee is all about enriching your student experience, providing not just academic support but also opportunities to sharpen practical skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Being a member of the LSA isn't just a title – it's an invitation to a world of benefits that can shape your university journey in unforeseen ways. The active engagement of our members creates an environment where possibilities thrive.

Our strong partnership with the UniSC School of Law and Society sets the stage for effective advocacy on behalf of students. We maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Law Faculty to ensure your voice is heard.

Beyond advocacy, the LSA is a close-knit community of like-minded individuals, here for all. Whether you spot us on campus, connect through our social media platforms, or attend our awesome events, we are always here. Your questions, thoughts, and ideas are welcomed.

As we embark on the adventure that is 2024, the committee and I are planning some unforgettable events both career focused and social. I extend an enthusiastic invitation to all law students to dive in, participate, and make this year uniquely yours.

Lets make 2024 the greatest year.



LSA President

Vienna Mitchell

MEET YOUR TEACHERS



Professor Jay Sanderson

Dean, School of Law and
Society

Jay is an interdisciplinary academic with degrees in law, psychology and sports science. He has previously taught Tort Law, Legal Research and Intellectual Property.

In terms of advice, attend and prepare for your classes and think about the legal content, issues and analysis you will encounter in your classes. You should also think about how you best learn and set up strategies to ensure you can do this... I still like hand-written notes!

Your time at University is short. So, take advantage of as many opportunities as possible and attend as many curricula and extra-curricular activities as you can.

Join the LSA!! I would also suggest taking care of yourself - physically and mentally.

Watch David Knobel's Graduation Address of 2018.

Finally, know that the academic staff in the Law Program are committed to your success and wellbeing.



Dr Ashley Pearson

Program Coordinator, Law

Hello! My name is Ashley Pearson, and I am the Program Coordinator for the Law Program here at UniSC.

That means that if you ever run into any tricky questions about your program progression, transfer credit, review applications, and all that jazz, I'll be your first port of call.

Email me anytime at apearson@usc.edu.au.

Your journey in studying law will be challenging, at times stressful, but hopefully always wonderful. A few tips to begin your journey:

1. Stay in contact.

Your email and the Canvas notifications are the main way that staff will get in contact with you. Set up a forwarding system to your personal email if you don't plan on regularly checking your UniSC one. The Student Portal is the main place where I will post events, job opportunities, and anything of interest to the law cohort so check in every once in a while.

2. Plan your time.

Asides from all of the vital skills you will be building (essay writing, critical thinking, oral communication), the skill of time management is often an undervalued one. Balancing life, work, and study can honestly be exhausting – breaking big hurdles into smaller, more manageable pieces is the best way to approach assessment. For exams, set timers based on the amount of points the question is worth. When that timer goes off – finish the sentence and move on!

3. Do it for you, not the assessment.

Assessment is important but so is your learning. It can become easy to fixate on assessment as a measure of your success but there are so many factors that go into the work you produce, as well as the marking and weighting of it. Remember: your mark is absolutely not a reflection of you or your potential. And if you want to improve, read your feedback or come and have a chat with your course staff. Where possible: learn for the sake of learning, be curious. That's more fun than doing it for the sake of a number.

4. You are not alone.

The university journey can be overwhelming at times. If you get caught in the tide, remember that you are not alone and please reach out. The staff are here to help. The friends you make along the way want to see you succeed. We're all rooting for you.

I wish you all the best in your first year of law studies. Enjoy the ride.

FOUNDATIONS A

Alex Pelizzon

Course coordinator - Foundations A



Greetings, everyone. My name is Alessandro (Alex) Pelizzon. Italian by birth, and Australian by choice, I completed my LLB/LLM at the University of Turin in Italy, specializing in comparative law and legal anthropology with a field research project conducted in the Andes.

My Doctoral research, conducted at the University of Wollongong, focused on native title and legal pluralism in the Illawarra region.

Since 2009, I have been exploring the emerging discourse on rights of Nature, Wild Law and Earth Jurisprudence, and I am a co-founder and an Executive Committee Member of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature and an expert member of the UN Harmony with Nature programme. My main areas of research are legal anthropology, legal theory, comparative law, ecological jurisprudence, sovereignty, and Indigenous rights. My most recent book, titled *Ecological Jurisprudence: Law, Representation and Environmental Metaphysics* is about to be published by Edinburgh University Press.

The greatest advice that I have for all is to always question everything you assume to know. Challenge yourself, and kindly challenge others, for only by doing so we truly stretch the boundaries of our knowledge.

I look forward to such a collective challenge in the months to come!

Joined by Sharon Butson & Jackson
Orma-Ditchfield

CRIMINAL LAW & PROCEDURE A & B

Kelley Burton

Associate Professor - Course
Coordinator



Welcome to first year law! I am the Course Coordinator for Criminal Law and Procedure (LAW103/LAW104) and Evidence (LAW403). I am the author of several books that support students to understand criminal law and develop problem-solving skills. My PhD was on the criminalisation of making and/or distributing visual recordings. My learning and teaching initiatives simultaneously support student wellbeing and academic success.

My biggest tips for first year law students are continuously grow your skills, for example your IRAC (issue, rule, application and conclusion) problem-solving technique; always read the rubric before submitting an assessment task; network with your peers, teachers and the profession; and be aware of strategies to manage vicarious trauma.

Joined by Madeline Minniti

FOUNDATIONS B



Dr Dale Mitchell

Course coordinator - Foundations B

Hello there!

I'm Dale Mitchell, Lecturer in Law here at UniSC. You will suffer through my extended monologues and waving arms in Foundations of Australian Law B. I also teach Contract Law and Civil Procedure.

To quote Obi-Wan Kenobi - 'You've taken your first step into a larger world.' Enrolling here at UniSC means that if you were the big fish in high school or in industry, you are about to enter a whole new ocean of people, knowledges, and challenges.

To quote Star Wars again: 'there's always a bigger fish!' This can be very humbling, especially because you are all high achievers, so I encourage you to have good humour to navigate the journey ahead.

Law is language. That means that most of legal skills and knowledge is built upon English skills - writing, reading, comprehension, expression. These are the skills upon which all law is built. How do I become a better writer and reader? By writing and reading! Go pick up a book and have a read. This doesn't need to be your textbook - although those readings help. It could be fiction or something else you are interested in. Digest those words and engage in the classes.

Your peers are your greatest resource and provide the foundation for your professional network. Your teachers are helpful, down-to-earth, and are not scary. Please contact us if you need help or would like to chat.

Thanks for choosing UniSC - where no matter what acronym they try and make us use, it always starts with You.

Joined by Jade Reeves & Jesse McCrea

Your referencing guide for your whole degree!

The Australian Guide to Legal Citation is a referencing style for legal citations that consists of:

- Citations in the body of the page, using a superscript (raised) number
- A list of footnotes at the bottom (foot) of each page, for all citations on that page
- Possibly a bibliography (ask your instructor or publisher). If a bibliography is required it should be provided at the end of the paper and give details of each source mentioned in the text, as well as details of other sources consulted in preparing the paper



HELPFUL REASOURCES

THOMSON REUTERS
WESTLAW™

Where you will find all your cases and other helpful info

These two research databases are going to be your saving grace through out your degree.

Fine these under the database tabs on UniSC Library

One is not better than the other - you will find the right one for you!



LexisNexis®

The UniSC Library is the best place to go for looking for literally anything!!

EVENTS GUIDE

SEMESTER ONE

O-Week

**Thursday 28th February -
Rooftop Bar Maroochydore**

Our unofficial start to the uni year kicks off at the Rooftop Bar and Garden. Casual drinks and a chat are a great way to meet some friendly faces from the LSA and will give you some friends to spot on campus if you need a hand during your first week.

Launch Party

**Thursday 14th March - The
Dock Mooloolaba**

Our Semester one black and white themed launch party is an event not to be missed. For first year students it's a great way to socialise and meet new people. Everyone from first to fifth year will be there dressed in their best black and white outfits. We cannot wait to see you!

Law on Tour

Wednesday 17th April - Place TBA

Everyone says it's who you know not what you know. This event provides the perfect opportunity to network with legal professionals and gain a deeper insight into the world of law outside of a textbook. We invite guests from all areas of the industry to share advice and help answer your questions. Although it may seem daunting, it is a great way to expand your knowledge and learn some handy tips.



SEMESTER TWO

Unofficial

Week 2 - La Cantina

Our unofficial start to Semester 2 kicks off at La Cantina. Casual drinks and a chat are a great way to meet some friendly faces from the LSA and to catch up with some uni friends before classes go back to normal.

Women in Law

Week 6 - Cotton Tree Beach Bar

Women in Law is one of our most successful events, celebrating the achievements of women in law on the Sunshine Coast. This event provides the opportunity for you to hear from inspirational women as they share stories about their lives, professional experiences, and challenges they've faced within the legal industry. A chat with inspiring women plus some breaky on the side is certainly not something to be missed.

Law Ball !!

Week 12 - Saturday 19th October - Venue TBA

Law Ball is our biggest event of the year, filled with all the beauty. Although attending an event with older students and lecturers may seem intimidating, everyone is more than happy to welcome new faces onto the dance floor. With tickets including a full meal and an open bar, it's no wonder they sell out quickly. We can't wait to see you in your most gorgeous dresses and suits.



VP Events Amelia Strazdins

“My biggest tip would be to organise study groups with your friends- it’s motivating, productive and allows you to have a bit of fun!!”



Becoming a lawyer



I made it to uni... now what?

Unfortunately, becoming a lawyer isn't as easy as simply completing your degree. Here's a (very) brief overview of what's involved before you can be a practicing lawyer!

1. Completing your Law Degree (LLB)

You're already on the way to completing the first step! It will be beneficial to seek out volunteering, internship or employment opportunities to continue developing your resume while you study. Getting involved in LSA events is an easy way to build your personal and professional networks.

2. Practical Legal Training (PLT)

A PLT course generally covers skills like legal writing and drafting, as well as a period of work experience. Here, you'll be given the chance to implement your skills in a practical setting while being supervised by industry professionals. Completing PLT will give you a Diploma of Legal Practice.

3. Applying for Admission

The Supreme Court, in conjunction with the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board (LPAB) assess applicants for their eligibility and suitability by establishing a number of requirements. These requirements include completing all of the steps prior and in addition, satisfying the admissions board and the court that you are fit to practice. If all of these requirements are met by the applicant, the LPAB will issue a certificate of compliance.

4. Applying for your Practicing Certificate


To practice law in Queensland, it is a requirement that you hold a practicing certificate. To apply for a practicing certificate, you will need to complete the application form and submit some documentation to the Queensland Law Society. Your practicing certificate will then need to be renewed annually.

Your Story, Your Career Be the Whole Lawyer.

Discover Australia's
leading PLT Program



Set yourself up for a successful legal career with PLT at Leo Cussen.

- Say goodbye to tests and exams, experience real work in a supportive setting 
- Be mentored by practising lawyers 
- No placement? No worries, we can arrange it for you 
- Gain 1-on-1 access to specialist careers advisors experienced in legal recruitment 
- Receive personalised assistance to navigate the admission process 
- Placement is only 15 days (20 days in WA) without any additional or hidden costs 





Careers Outside of Private Practice

Accounting

Law students at the University of the Sunshine Coast may complete a double degree that consists of a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting). This allows for entry into a career in either the legal or accounting industries.

The role of an accountant is to assist and prepare financial records for their clients. This includes assisting with tax declarations, auditing and compliance, financial management, investment advice, and providing detailed reports to both management and legal personnel.

The Big Four (EY, KPMG, Deloitte and PWC) are industry leaders which recruit law graduates to their respective teams. You might specialise in areas such as taxation law, consulting or financial advisory, working across both state and international lines.

To practice as an accountant you will need a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) or equivalent degree. Additionally, you are required to hold an active membership with either the Institute of Public Accountants (IPA), Certified Practising Accountants Australia (CPA), or Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA).



Academic

Being a Professor of Law is more than just lecturing and tutoring, it is largely focused on contributing to the field by way of research and peer-reviewed articles. Taking this path generally requires a high level of academic excellence, the completion of an honours program and strong founded relationships within the legal faculty. Once you have secured a position, you will begin building your academic portfolio by publishing articles, delivering lectures to students and engaging in extracurricular activities inside and outside of the University. Most jobs in academia will require you to hold a minimum of a masters degree or PhD.

Politics

Whilst to be a parliamentarian you are not required to hold any qualifications; a strong and broad education will only serve to be advantageous in the pursuit of this career. The skills of advocacy, argumentation and critical thinking, developed in Law school, are a strong foundation of character for any person wishing to become involved in politics. Furthermore, a breadth of understanding of how the legal system operates, including specifically the workings of the Commonwealth as prescribed by the Constitution, also provides candidates with a head-start as they begin their political career.



Government Sector

The role of a government employed lawyer is to act on behalf of and provide legal advice for government agencies and ministers. In addition, the government sector encompasses all public service roles on both State and National levels. Some of the department agencies include:

- The Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (State and Commonwealth)
- Crown Solicitors Office
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)
- The Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO)



Community Sector

The Community sector of law includes a wide variety of organisations across all different sectors. The purpose of these organisations is the occupation of charitable services. Working for a charitable organisation provides you with the opportunity to combine your legal knowledge with a passion and drive to help others in need. The type of organisation you work for will dictate the area which your employment will make a difference to the community.



SOCIAL MEDIA



VP Publications Aviendah Dwyer-Flynn

“Ask as many questions as you need to. Everyone at uni is there to help and if you ask the questions you will feel more confident and comfortable with your new uni experience.”

The publication team is responsible for all social media and publications like this first years guide!

Wondering what to do after uni? check out our careers guide here: <https://usclsa.com/lisa-careers-guide>

To keep up with all events and updates follow us on **Insta, facebook and LinkedIn!**





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- > Fun, supportive culture

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keylaw

Unlock your next chapter

COMPETITIONS



Negotiations

The Negotiation Competition takes place in Semester One, and is a great opportunity to get your feet wet with practical experience early into your degree! A workshop is held before the competition starts to help get you prepared.

Even if you don't want to get involved, you can come along and watch the final to see how it's done!

Client Interviews

A new one for the uniSC LSA, Client interviews will take place in semester 2 this year.

Get into teams of two and ask a fictional client all the questions you need to be able to effectively represent them.

This competition gives you the chance to emulate the real-world client/solicitor relationship, without the stakes of a real person's life.

VP Competitions

James Wood

“be curious, not judgemental”



“You get to practice the stuff you think of when you think of being a lawyer” - Mitchell Bell, ALSA negotiations finalist 2023

VP Education

Emma Bryan



“Don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone! Talk to your peers, ask questions in class, or attend that event you’ve been wanting to try. You’ll get the most enjoyable uni experience by reaching out and trying new things!”

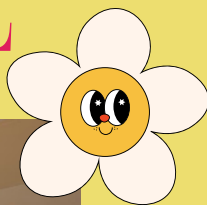
How to manage your new study load?

1. Use a study planner
2. Check deadlines for assessments
3. Have study sessions with friends
4. Talk to student services if you need a learning access plan
5. Attend as many workshops and drop-in sessions as you can
6. Attend classes

Check out Student Guild!

1. Recreational Activities and Events
2. Clubs and Societies
3. Student advocacy and support
4. Confidential Welfare service
5. Foodbank & community kitchen
6. Budgeting workshops
7. Free legal referrals

STAYING WELL



Reach out to Student Support whenever you need.

Sippy Downs - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive,

Moreton Bay - Service Centre, Building A – Ground Floor, 1 Moreton Bay Parade, 17

THANK YOU TO OUR LSA COMMITTEE

Secretary Taylor Medwin

"Law school is hard but it is somewhere you will meet your best friends for life. That is what makes it worth it for me."



Treasurer Ruby Natoli

"My biggest tip for a first-year student would be to make use of the study rooms in the library. You can book through the UniSC website, and they make a great space to study with friends in a quiet environment."

UniSC ISA

2024

