

# LAW – CAREER SNAPSHOT



## BOOST YOUR PROSPECTS



Explore your options, clarify your career goals



Build your networks



Gain course relevant experience



Fine tune your job application skills



Show initiative, engage in extra-curricular activities and stand out

For further ideas access the [JCU Career Action Plan](#)

## Solicitors

### Fast Facts



\$1,917

Weekly Pay ?



70,100 workers

Employment Size ?



Moderate

Future Growth ?



Very high skill

Skill level rating ?



Lower unemployment

Unemployment ?

Source: [Job Outlook 2018](#)

## Graduate Opportunities

JCU Law graduates are highly valued by the profession in our region, across Australia and overseas.

Opportunities for employment of JCU Law graduates exist in a wide variety of areas. Common areas of legal practice include business and commercial law, environmental law, property law, criminal law, taxation law, corporate law, bankruptcy and insolvency, wills and estates, intellectual property law, anti-discrimination law and family law.

In addition to traditional legal practice, there are many legal and quasi-legal roles in government, not-for-profit organisations, industry and business. In many of those roles, graduates are not required to be admitted as a lawyer or hold a practising certificate, it is the broad range of skills law graduates possess that is attractive to the employers.

### The top ten employers of JCU Law alumni listed on LinkedIn are:

Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Australian Taxation Office, Queensland Government, Wilson/Ryan/Grose Lawyers, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Qld, Grant Thornton Australia, Connolly Suthers Lawyers, and Townsville Community Legal Service Inc.

Source: [James Cook University Alumni LinkedIn](#) Retrieved 11 September, 2018.

In addition to legal positions, JCU Law graduates are employed in business development, education, community and social services, operations, administration, accounting, entrepreneurship, finance and human resources.

Source: [James Cook University Alumni LinkedIn](#) retrieved 31 October, 2018.

Over 2,400 JCU alumni have listed 'law' within their **LinkedIn profile**. Investigate their profiles to identify career pathways and current and past employers of JCU Law graduates.

### Further Career, Salary and Market Information

- [Mahlab Specialists in legal search](#)
- [GradAustralia Careers outside of law](#)
- [RRR Law – rewarding legal careers in rural, regional and remote Australia](#)
- [The College of Law - Career options for lawyers](#)

## Specialisations

**Solicitors** – specialize in areas such as property, probate, workers compensation, family law, personal injuries litigation, commercial law or criminal law. Solicitors may work in private legal practices or in state, territory or federal government departments, in community law

centres, not-for-profit organisations or within business corporations.

**Barristers** – provide legal advice and draft documents in complex matters. They plead cases before civil, criminal and industrial courts and other tribunals. Generally the barrister is briefed by the solicitor who instructs the barrister on behalf of the client. Barristers are self-employed but normally practice in chambers with other barristers.

## Accreditation

Graduates of the JCU Bachelor of Laws satisfy the **academic requirements** for admission to practice law in Queensland and through the mutual recognition process, in all Australian states and territories. Completing your Law degree is the **first step** towards being admitted as a legal practitioner.

### How to Become a Solicitor

To practice as a solicitor in Queensland requires four steps:

1. Completion of an **approved law degree**
2. Completion of an approved **practical legal training (PLT)** course or a **supervised traineeship**
3. Application for admission to the **Roll of Lawyers**
4. Application for a solicitor's practising certificate – this certificate is required to practise law in Queensland.

Further information is available at [Queensland Law Society](#) (Retrieved 11 September 2018).

### How to Become a Barrister

Whilst the academic and admission requirements for barristers and solicitors are the same, to obtain a barrister's practising certificate in Queensland you will need to **undertake further studies** after you are admitted as a lawyer followed by **one year of mentoring and supervision**.

Further information is available at [The Bar Association of Queensland](#) (Retrieved 11 September, 2018).



## Future Proofing Yourself

According to the law profession futures expert Richard Susskind (susskind.com), the following two trends are effecting change in dispersing legal advice to commercial clients:

**1. Drive to pay less for more, to pay for the results rather than the input** (end of the “billable hour”, increasing focus on fixed-fee work) and pay only for tailored advice.

**2. Automation:** due to the pressures outlined in point one some of the more routine work can be automated and delivered 24/7 on a subscription basis thus still creating a stream of revenue.

This highlights the opportunities for lawyers who develop IT and project management skills allowing them to assume hybrid legal positions of the future, such as:

- Legal Technologists – lawyers with IT system management skills
- Legal Process Analysts – lawyers able to break down the legal process into components that can be transferred into an IT system
- Online Dispute Resolution Practitioners
- Legal Project Managers – who break down a legal process into various components, allocates them to various service providers, executes quality and ensures that it comes together at the end
- Legal Risk Managers
- Legal Management Consultants (R. Susskind, Tomorrow’s Lawyers, an Introduction to Your Future, Oxford University Press, 2017)

## Job Opportunities and Employer Expectations

Online job boards, graduate recruitment directories, employer websites, Facebook pages, LinkedIn accounts and twitter feeds provide information on **job opportunities and employer requirements and expectations**.

It is important you work towards gaining the skills, knowledge and experience identified to ensure you are competitive when entering the graduate labour market.

### Online Job Boards

- [SEEK](#)
- [Lawyers Weekly](#)
- [JCU Careerhub](#)
- [Social Justice Opportunities](#)

- [Legal Aid Queensland](#)
- [Australian Public Service recruitment](#)
- [Queensland Government Jobs](#)

### Graduate Recruitment Directories

These online directories provide information on graduate jobs, graduate programs, internships and vacation programs.

- [GradAustralia](#)
- [GradConnection](#)
- [Graduate Opportunities](#)
- [Queensland Government Graduate Portal](#)
- [APS jobs Graduate Programs](#)

## Professional Associations

JCU Law students are eligible for student membership with:

- [Queensland Law Society](#)
- [TDLA Townsville District Law Association](#)
- [FNQLA Far North Queensland Law Association](#)

Membership benefits include: access to industry specific information and publications, career information and advice, and professional development including conferences, seminars and on-demand content.

## Workplace Experience

Gaining **career relevant experience** before you graduate can improve your job prospects and help you stand out against other applicants.

Employers see **evidence of your ability to apply the skills and knowledge gained** through your study and you gain **valuable insight** into the type of job/field of employment you might enjoy.

In addition to the opportunities presented in your final year of Law through the [WIL \(Work Integrated Learning\)](#) program, including Clinical Legal Studies, Legal Placement, Advocacy and Criminal Sentencing, and the Multidisciplinary Project, it is recommended you actively seek further law related volunteer or paid opportunities.

**Vacation Programs and Internships** are generally offered by employers to students in the middle / final years of their degree. These programs may lead to graduate employment with the employer.

**Volunteer work** opportunities are listed on:

- [Court Network](#)

- [Environmental Defender’s Office of North Queensland](#)
- [Cairns Community Legal Centre](#)
- [Townsville Community Legal Service](#)
- [Community Legal Centre Volunteers](#)
- [Queensland Advocacy Incorporated](#)
- [Women’s Legal Service Qld](#)
- [FNQ Volunteers](#)
- [Volunteering North Queensland](#)

## Graduate Programs

**Graduate programs** are paid structured professional development positions offered by large organisations or government departments, where successful applicants are offered on the job training and mentoring within the organisation.

The organisation generally **recruits students in their final year of study** for commencement in the following year. Applications open as early as March. Graduate programs are competitive so it is important to understand the recruitment criteria and work towards ensuring you have the skills, knowledge and experience expected.

## Stand Out

Employers want to know you can offer more than your educational qualifications. **Be proactive, get involved and stand out from the crowd.**

- Join your JCU Student Association eg [Inter Alia Law Society Cairns](#), [JCU Law Students’ Society Townsville](#)
- Join the [FNQ Law Association Mentoring program](#) –final year law students are matched with like-minded legal professionals
- Attend networking opportunities
- Undertake relevant professional development. Keep a record
- Engage with LinkedIn, develop an impressive online profile, connect with professionals and follow employers of interest
- Compete in student law related [competitions and challenges](#) to develop skills and demonstrate initiative
- Participate in extra-curricular activities, pursue your interests. Employers’ value well rounded applicants.