LLB 397 LEGAL INTERNSHIP & THE LEGAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (LIP) – GENERAL INFORMATION

Since the LLB program began at UOW, students have been required to undertake a period of professional experience as part of the LLB. Originally, this experience or ‘placement’ was part of the compulsory subject, Lawyers and Australian Society. Since Spring 2009, the 8 credit point compulsory subject, LLB 190 Lawyers and Australian Society, has been renamed LLB 197 Lawyers and Australian Society and reduced to 6 credit points with the compulsory workplace placement that was part of LLB 190 now forming the 2 credit point compulsory subject LLB 397 Legal Internship. The ‘professional experience program’ is now the ‘Legal Internship Program’ (LIP).

You cannot be enrolled in LLB 397 and undertake your internship until after you have completed LLB 197 and one of LLB 220, 230 or 240. For most of you this will be in the second half of your second year at the very earliest. Many undertake LLB 397 in the penultimate or final year of study.

Three instances of this subject are offered each year (exact dates will be in the Subject outline for each instance plus on the Law website at : :

- LIP 1 – runs during Autumn session time.
- LIP 2 – runs from the end of Autumn session, over the Winter Recess and finish at the end of Spring Session.
- LIP Summer – runs from the end of Spring Session, over Summer Recess and finishes just before Autumn session commences.

From 2015, the Law School will enrol you in the relevant instance of the subject once you have had your internship approved.

Law School arranged internships

As Law School arranged placements only take place in either the Winter or Summer Recess), you should be enrolled in LIP 2 or LIP Summer respectively if you will be undertaking a School-arranged internship. Applications for School arranged internships must be lodged by end of week 4 of Autumn (if seeking a Winter recess internship) or Spring (if seeking Summer recess internship) session.

School arranged internships are unpaid and are based on a 4 week (20 day) block. In Winter recess this will be in June-July and in Summer recess, there will usually be one block of 4 weeks in November (after exams) to December and another in January – February, though some providers may be able to offer (or prefer) variations on this. You therefore need to be sure that you are available for the block period before taking on the internship. The Student Handbook for LLB 397 sets out the objectives of the School of Law’s Legal Internship Program (LIP) and requirements. Application forms as well as the Student Handbook and the LLB 397 Guidelines for Supervisors are available from the Law School website (http://www.uow.edu.au/law/acastaff/UOW014115.html). The LLB 397 Moodle site will also contain the handbook, guidelines and subject outline.

You are asked to indicate on the application form three areas of interest or types of legal workplace (eg Commercial litigation, family law, criminal law, Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Service etc) in order of preference. You are also asked to submit a one page document indicating why you are interested in that/those area/s. You are also be asked to indicate any other factors the School needs to consider – eg location/travel, career duties, any disabilities or special needs etc. The School will endeavour to match students with providers as quickly as possible but it may be that a place is not found for you until shortly before the internship period. If completing the internship in a particular period is crucial to your graduation you should not leave arrangements until the last minute and should consider lining up your own internship as a back-up in case a School-arranged one does not eventuate. Conversely, if you have applied for a paid or unpaid clerkship or internship over Summer or Winter recess under some other scheme (eg the Summer Clerkship program offered by some of the Sydney firms), but are unsure as to whether you will be successful, you should probably also apply for a School-arranged internship as a back-up. You can always withdraw the application if you obtain a clerkship or other self-arranged internship. Once you have been allocated a School-arranged internship, you will be enrolled in the relevant instance of LLB 397.
Self-arranged internships
A self-arranged internship (whether paid or unpaid work) may take place any time during the instance in which you will be enrolled, subject to enrolment deadlines and approval requirements set out on the School website and detailed in the Student Handbook. Briefly, these are:

- application form and letter from supervisor (see details on form) must be lodged for approval at least 2 weeks prior to intended start of internship period (note approval cannot be given retrospectively and credit cannot be given for past experience).
- You must be under the supervision of a lawyer of at least 3 year’s post admission experience with a current practising certificate.
- The proposed period of internship should be completed within one of the relevant ‘LIP” instances and allow enough time for submission of journal etc (see below under “Assessment”) to meet grade declaration deadlines.
- The attendance pattern can be negotiated with your supervisor so it is mutually suitable as long as it does not involve less that 2 days attendance per week over the period of the internship Note too, if you are undertaking the internship over regular session time for your other subjects (eg working part-time in a law firm while studying), attendance for an internship is not an excuse for failure to attend scheduled classes.

If you have any concerns as to whether your intended internship will meet with the LIP requirements, see the Academic Co-ordinator. If you already have employment that would meet the requirements of LIP, or have lined up such employment for a future period, then, subject to the comments above, you may use that employment as your LLB 397 internship. Such experience, however, cannot be credited retrospectively. Days cannot start being counted until approval has been given. If you have already been employed in a legal workplace for some time, the past time cannot be counted but you can nominate a future period over which you will be completing the 20 days (note, keep in mind the deadlines referred to above re completion and grade declaration). The sooner you get your application in (with letter from supervisor), the sooner your arrangements can be approved.

From time to time, the School is notified of internship opportunities offered by firms or organisations in Australia and internationally. These will be advertised throughout the School.

Enrolment and Assessment
Once an internship has been found for you or once your application for a self-arranged internship is approved, you will be enrolled in the relevant instance of LLB 397 by Law admin staff.

Whether the internship is self-arranged or Law School arranged, all students must make sure they comply with the assessment requirements (see the student handbook and subject outline for details) including submission of objectives by day 3 of the internship, the reflective journal, student evaluation and attendance record. These last three items must be submitted within 2 weeks of completing the internship. As the instances in which this subject are offered do not follow ‘normal’ session periods, the dates for withdrawal without penalty (academic or financial) are different to those that apply to most other subjects. Please read the information in your subject outline.

As you must complete your internship before you can complete your LLB, think carefully about where you are going to do the internship over your LLB studies. Remember, Law School arranged internships take place only over the Winter or Summer recess. For example, if you intend to graduate in say, December of a particular year, the very last time that a Law School-arranged internship could be completed in time for a December graduation is the Winter recess of that year.

Finally, if you have any questions, please contact Theresa Huxtable (Internship/placement administrative co-ordinator) on 42215331 or email on huxtable@uow.edu.au or John Littrich (internship/placement academic coordinator) on 42213730 or email on littrich@uow.edu.au.