LAW4803
Advanced Professional Practice – Monash/Ashurst Corporate Governance and Responsibility Clinic

Synopsis

The Monash/Ashurst Clinic is a clinical externship unit that offers four students practical experience (under Ashurst supervision) assisting small/mid-cap ASX listed companies with corporate governance issues.

Students review the client company's Annual Report and other publicly available information for compliance with ASX Corporate Governance Council’s Principles and Recommendations. Over the course of the semester students, with the support of Ashurst lawyers, prepare a report to present to company officers at the end of the course. Ashurst lawyers provide their time free as part of Ashurst's own Corporate Social Responsibility commitment.

The Clinic has been well received by Clinic client companies and also participating students. Here are some "testimonials" from Clinic students:

"Participating in the Ashurst Clinic was one of my best uni experiences. The content is stimulating and enjoyable with a focus on research, team discussion, and developing your own ideas. … I would highly recommend participating in this clinic, whether your plan is to head into the corporate world or not. You will gain so much from this experience."

"Doing real work for real clients was both unique and challenging. … This was a completely different experience to anything I'd done before as part of my law degree."

"If you have an interest in gaining greater knowledge in … corporate governance and also … gain more practical legal experience while still at university, then I highly recommend you apply for a position in this clinical class. … Along with … the Professional Practice unit … this has been one of the best opportunities presented to me during my time at Monash".

"I would recommend this Clinic as a highly useful and relevant counterpart to … Corporations Law".

"I highly recommend the Monash/Ashurst Corporate Governance and Responsibility Clinic to any students interested in gaining practical experience in Corporate Law at a top tier firm. It’s a fantastic opportunity to perform high quality work in a commercial environment with engaging and supportive practitioners at Ashurst … and like-minded students in preparing and presenting corporate governance reports to companies."

A further benefit is that the Clinic allows students to get to know Ashurst and vice versa.
This clinic is offered in first and second semesters only – it is not available over summer semesters.

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<tr>
<th>Pre/Co-requisites</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LAW1101 and LAW1104;</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAW2101 and LAW2102;</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAW2201 and LAW2202;</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAW3301 and LAW3302.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAW3112 (formerly LAW4171)</td>
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<td>In addition, preference for a placement in this clinic will be given to students who have completed LAW4328. (Formerly LAW5126 Professional Practice)</td>
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a) Selection

Places in this unit are intended to provide a route for high-performing Professional Practice students from prior clinical periods and for other appropriate students. Places are very limited and entry will involve an interview with a law school staff member and a solicitor from the host firm.

Students will be initially selected for interview on the basis of the completion of an application form. Students must have completed LAW4171 Corporations Law or be completing LAW3112 to be considered for interview.

In addition to the above requirement, a determination is made on whether students are accepted for interview on the following basis:

a) Whether all the other prerequisites have been completed.

b) How close the student is to completing their degree. Preference is given to students who would be completing Advanced Professional Practice towards the end of their degree.

c) How many hours of paid or volunteer external work the student is doing. If a student is doing more than 20 hours per week of external work, then it normally they would not be accepted into the unit. Students may be contacted to discuss this further regarding flexibility.

d) How many other units are being taken with Clinical Externship. If the student is doing more than three other units as well as advanced Professional Practice, normally they would not be accepted into the unit.

b) Overview

Participation in this unit takes place in either of both of the following activities:

1. Preparing (under Ashurst supervision) corporate governance reports for ASX listed companies. Ashurst will seek companies that are willing to receive these reports. An Ashurst partner/SC/SA will meet with company representatives to prepare the report along with the students, once completed.

These reports will:

a) review compliance with ASX corporate governance principles (excluding principle 8 – executive remuneration);
b) provide general guidelines on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and directors’ duties and checklists; and

2. Establishment and support for "Legal Health Check Clinics" for Not For Profit organisations, to be conducted by Ashurst’s pro bono program in conjunction with in-house counsel from other organisations these clinics will provide free advice on corporate governance and related issues to Not For Profit organisations.

The Workload

Students are required to attend one 4-hour clinic session per week at Ashurst’s city offices located at 181 William Street in Melbourne. After the first few sessions (which are mainly taken up by induction and introductory training), the first hour or two of each session is spent with Ashurst senior lawyers, followed by time for students to work together on team projects. Students will also need to spend an average of 9 hours per week on reading, research and their own individual tasks on corporate governance and company law matters.

Further, students will be expected to attend and participate in the presentation of the corporate governance reports to the appropriate organisations at the finalisation of the semester.

Assessment Summary

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Casework at Clinic according to attached criteria</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Research paper (1000-1500 words)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29 May 2015</td>
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