

CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION FAQs

How do I get in? What do I put on the application form?

Application forms can be found at <http://www.monash.edu/law/about-us/legal/cle/undergraduate-units>. You should answer all questions on the form in as much detail as possible – the form will mention if supporting documentation is required.

Given entry is by application (and sometimes interview) only, what can I do to improve my chances of being accepted into a clinical unit?

To some extent this depends on the particular clinical unit you are applying for, and (if it is one of the clinical externships), the specific externship concerned. It is important to ensure that you have completed any relevant prerequisites. If applying for a clinical externship, you should be adequately prepared for any interview by undertaking background research about the host organisation, current issues in the field, recent legislative developments and so on.

Do I have to attend classes/sessions or is it recorded?

Class attendance is compulsory – seminars will not be recorded. The purpose of clinical legal education is for you to obtain hands-on, practical legal experience. If you cannot commit to attending all seminars and sessions, or being available for ongoing file work, you should not apply for the unit.

How do the prerequisites work? (e.g. can I be doing torts at the same time or do I have to have finished that before I enrol)?

All prerequisites must have been completed before enrolling in a clinical unit. If a subject is listed as a co-requisite, it can be undertaken at the same time as a CLE unit.

At what point in my degree should I apply to undertake a clinical unit?

You can apply to undertake a clinical unit at any point in your degree after you have completed the relevant prerequisite units, however preference will be given to students who would be undertaking the unit towards the end of their degree.

Does the unit count for PLT hours?

In some instances, yes. If you are accepted into one of the clinical units, you should speak to your supervisor or the Unit Co-ordinator for further advice.

I hear students can do appearances in Court. Do I have to apply separately to the Court?

No you do not. Student appearances may be allowed for Professional Practice (JD, Undergraduate and FLAP) students at the discretion of your clinical supervisor and the Court. Your client must also consent. You will be guided through this process if appropriate.

How many hours do I have to commit to the unit?

For students undertaking Professional Practice, you must be able to commit to one half-day session in addition to one and a half days per week of client follow-up and one 2-hour seminar per week (i.e. you should commit to spending at least 2.5 days per week at the service). Some

weeks you may be required to work additional hours to appropriately assist your clients (such as allowing time for briefing a barrister and attending court with your client).

It is therefore recommended that you take no more than two other units with Professional Practice due to the large time commitment. Students undertaking more than 20 hours per week of paid work will not normally be considered.

Clinical Externship units typically require attendance at one clinic session per week (normally 3 hours) in addition to 6 hours of private research, case preparation and consultation with your supervisor.

What are priority days for attendance and how do these work?

Both services (Springvale Monash Legal Service and Monash Oakleigh Legal Service) have limited space, desks and computers. For this reason, not all students can attend the service at the same time. At SMLS, we have implemented a 'priority day system' to manage these issues. Under this system, every student is given priority to attend the service on a particular day so that they can undertake ongoing case work. You will be notified of your priority day once you commence.

How are clinical units assessed?

Each clinical unit is assessed slightly differently. In undergraduate professional practice (LAW4328), for example, the majority of your assessment will be centred on your practical work at the relevant legal service including client management and legal skills (normally 80%), with the remainder being made up of work for community engagement (20%). You should refer to the Handbook entry for the relevant unit for more information. Detailed information on assessment requirements will be provided to you upon acceptance into the unit.

When will a decision be made? How will I know when I get in?

You will be notified by email if you have been offered a place in the unit. This will normally occur within 2 weeks of applications closing. You will also be notified if your application has been unsuccessful.

Is there a waiting list?

On occasion, the number of applications for a clinical unit exceeds the number of places available. The convenor of legal practice programs will make a decision about whether to add any unsuccessful applicants to a waiting list, or whether to offer you a provisional placement in the following clinical period. If your application is unsuccessful you may need to re-apply for a position in the next clinical period.

In the summer offering, what happens if I have an exam on the day of my allocated session? Will I be able to make up the time?

You should advise your supervisor as soon as you become aware of a clash between your session date and an exam. Arrangements can normally be made to swap your session with another student. Alternatively, your supervisor may allow you to make up the time.

When will I find out my results?

Results for the clinical units are not normally released until approximately 4 months after completion of the unit [e.g. for CP1 2015-2016, results will not be released until mid-July 2016]. Exact dates are posted on the Clinical Legal Education website closer to that time.

Do I need to attend during the mid-semester break?

For clinical units there is ordinarily an expectation that you will continue to work across the mid-semester break. In professional practice, for example, you will be undertaking work on behalf of clients who may have looming court dates or statutes of limitation. Given the nature of the unit, there is an expectation that students will continue to work throughout this time.

I am a JD student; am I eligible to apply for one of the clinical externships?

Yes, clinical externships (LAW4803) are now open to JD students.