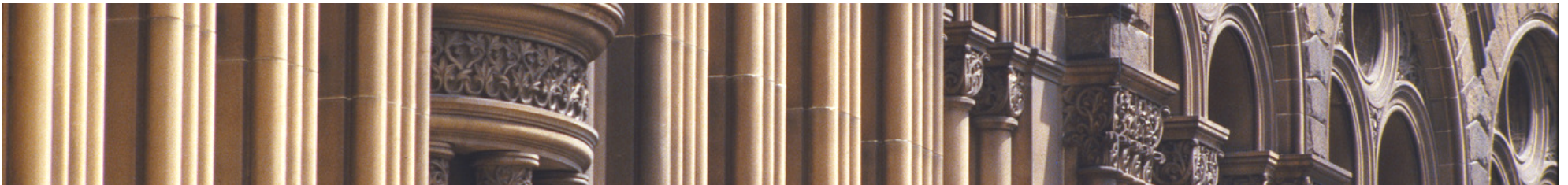


CRIMINAL AND FAMILY LAW



This has been prepared by the 2017/18 Careers & Sponsorship Portfolio, with the assistance of other publicly available materials. The information is merely advisory, and should not be relied upon without independent verification.



Criminal Law

Criminal lawyers may prosecute or defend those accused of crimes. These may range from serious crimes such as murder to summary offences such as traffic violations.

Criminal law often involves court work, either in trial, pleas or sentencing. Students interested in advocacy, quick-thinking and interacting with people from all walks of life may consider this field.

Family Law

Family lawyers manage disputes relating to divorce, child protection, custody, property settlement or estates. However, family issues can cover a range of legal topics (often in the same dispute).

Family lawyers often need to be able to manage clients who are in times of stress and to be comfortable in negotiations and advocacy. The day-to-day work of family lawyers can differ significantly, so this is ideal for students who like varied work!

Skills & Experiences

Family and criminal lawyers need exceptional people skills to manage clients in distress. Professionalism, adversarial strategy and pragmatism are also valuable in this field. Resilience is key, as the subject matter can be difficult.

Work experience, volunteering or undertaking electives related to these subjects will be valuable in developing these skills.

Criminal Law Firms

The Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal Services Commission offer structured clerkship programs. There are many private firms in Adelaide that hire on an as-needs basis (which can be found online).

There are also criminal law pathways in the public sector, such as the Australian Crime Commission, Attorney-General's Department, State Law Reform Commissions and Police Prosecutions.



Finding a Position

There are a few structured clerkship programs offered in the fields of criminal and family law. However, most private firms hire on an as-needs basis. The number of spots, timing of applications and eligibility of students vary depending on what each firm is looking for. If you're interested in working in the field, keep an eye on job websites to see when vacancies arise. These may be for administrative, law clerk or graduate roles.

If you would like some experience but can't find a vacancy, you can write to firms asking if they will accept work experience placements. You may also wish to write to barristers who specialise in criminal or family law for work experience.

Family Law Firms

The Legal Services Commission offers a structured clerkship program with a family law rotation.

There are many family law firms (which can be found online). Don't know where to start? Doyle's Guide publishes the Leading Family & Divorce Law Firms annually. This includes BBS Lawyers, Howe Jenkin, David Burrell & Co, Jordan & Fowler and Norman Waterhouse.

