



THE VICTORIAN BAR INCORPORATED

**INDIGENOUS LAW STUDENTS'
CLERKSHIP 2024**

INFORMATION BOOKLET

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The Victorian Bar offers a unique opportunity to see a side of the legal profession that is normally hidden. The Bar is offering up to six paid clerkship positions to Indigenous law students. The program operates like a vacation clerkship at solicitor firms. The Bar's program places emphasis on the tasks undertaken by barristers and judges. This work experience opportunity will be of interest to persons with an interest in considering a career in law. You do not have to have decided that you want to be a barrister.

THE 2024 PROGRAM – WHAT IS INVOLVED?

The clerkship will take place on mutually agreed dates in February and March 2024, depending on university timetables.

The clerkship involves four consecutive weeks with rotations as follows (not necessarily in this order):

- One week at the Victorian Bar;
- One week at the Federal Court of Australia;
- One week at the Supreme Court of Victoria;
- One week at the County Court of Victoria.

Although the Bar and the Courts have a firm preference for the clerkship occurring over consecutive weeks, where there are good reasons alternative arrangements may be able to be made.

Nonetheless, the weeks at the Courts should be completed in a single block (i.e. a single week at each).

At the beginning of the program, you are required to attend a short induction with the Bar office to discuss the operation of the clerkship, your responsibilities as a participant and the Bar's responsibilities to you.

While at the Bar, you will be placed with a barrister. You will attend client conferences or Court as appropriate. You may be asked to do some research tasks. The main focus will be on providing you with an opportunity to observe a barrister working and to ask any questions you might have. The barrister will talk to you about the tasks that he or she is undertaking at that time.

While you are at the Supreme Court, Federal Court or County Court, you will be based in a Judge's chambers. You will attend Court with the Judge and discuss the cases that he or she is sitting on. You may be asked to do some research tasks. It is important that you maintain confidentiality of the tasks you undertake.

On completion of the clerkship, you will be:

- (a) asked to complete a questionnaire reviewing your experiences and observations throughout the clerkship; and
- (b) provided with a letter for your records setting out details of the completed clerkship.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and are currently enrolled in a law degree at a recognised Australian University are eligible to apply for the clerkship.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are to be made by submitting the form attached in Schedule 1 to:

Manager, Finance and Membership
Victorian Bar Inc.
Level 5, 205 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Or by email to clerkships@vicbar.com.au

By submitting the attached form, the applicant:

- Agrees that they meet the eligibility criteria set out above;
- Agrees to be bound by the provisions of this application and selection procedure; and
- Agrees, if accepted, to commit their time to the full four weeks of the clerkship program.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The closing date for receipt of applications for the clerkship position is 4 December 2023.

SELECTION PROCESS

A selection panel comprised of some members of the Victorian Bar's Indigenous Justice Committee will receive and determine all applications in accordance with the criteria set out below.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

The elections process requires the consideration by the selection panel of all relevant criteria, including:

- Academic results in their legal studies at the time of the application;
- Stage reached by each applicant in his or her study;
- Interest in pursuing a career in law (including possibly at the Bar);
- Involvement in or contribution to the wider community;
- Previous legal experience; and
- Leadership qualities and overall persona characteristics of each applicant.

The selection panel may choose a "short list" of candidates and conduct an interview with each of them prior to concluding their assessment.

The decision of the selection panel will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into with any applicant except as outlined above and below.

NOTIFICATION

Upon the selection panel reaching a decision in respect of each clerkship position, the selection panel shall notify each applicant as follows:

1. Successful candidate

By email or letter enclosing a copy of the Letter of Employment (to be signed and returned to the Victorian Bar by the applicant within 7 days)

2. Unsuccessful applicant

By email or letter, thanking them for their application and informing them that their application was not successful and where appropriate, inviting them to apply again.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Each vacation clerk will be employed on the following basis:

1. Victorian Bar

The employer shall be the Victorian Bar Inc and the vacation clerk will report to and follow all such lawful directions of such person appointed by the Victorian Bar to supervise the vacation clerk as set out in the Letter of Employment.

The period of employment shall be the time specified in the Letter of Employment and the hours of employment will be from 9.00am to 5.00pm each weekday, with an unpaid lunch break between 1.00-2.00 pm.

2. Remuneration

The vacation clerk will be remunerated at the same rate applicable to the position as a casual employee at a Level 3 classification as prescribed by the Legal Services Award 2020. This is presently \$34.58 per hour and, multiplied by 35 hours/week totals \$1,210.30 gross per week.

The vacation clerk will be remunerated on a fortnightly basis by way of direct credit to the vacation clerk's bank account as arranged between the Victorian Bar and the clerk upon confirmation of completion of each week of clerkship.

3. Confidentiality

The vacation clerk undertakes and agrees to keep confidential all such information derived by him or her in the course of undertaking his or her duties as a vacation clerk.

4. Mentors

Each vacation clerk will be assigned a mentor, being barristers who are members of the Victorian Bar's Indigenous Justice Committee, or Judges, where the vacation clerkship occurs at the Supreme, Federal or County Court.

5. Appointment binding

By signing the Letter of Employment the vacation clerk agrees to:

- The terms and conditions set out in the Letter of Employment;
- Continue to abide by this application procedure and selection criteria; and
- Abide by the rules of the Victorian Bar so far as those rules can apply to a vacation clerk.

LETTER OF EMPLOYMENT

Each vacation clerk is required to sign the Letter of Employment set out at Schedule 2 before commencing the vacation clerkship offered to him or her.

INFORMATION

Any enquiries about this application procedure and selection criteria or the vacation clerkship generally may be made to:

Indigenous Justice Committee
Victorian Bar Inc.
Level 5, 205 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
03 9225 7111
Or by email to clerkships@vicbar.com.au

SCHEDULE 1

THE VICTORIAN BAR INDIGENOUS JUSTICE COMMITTEE

INDIGENOUS LAW STUDENTS' CLERKSHIP PROGRAM 2024

APPLICATION FORM

PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE	
MOBILE	
EMAIL	

ACADEMIC DETAILS

UNIVERSITY	
DEGREE	
YEARS OF STUDY	
LAW SUBJECT/S COMPLETED	

INDIGENOUS BACKGROUND

Please tell us about your background as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (i.e. your First Nations, if you know it; where your traditional country is; family history your mob)

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INTEREST IN PRACTISING LAW

Please let us know why you think you might be interested in practising law

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AREAS OF LAW INTERESTED IN

What areas/subjects of law interest you and why

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REFEREES

You may, if you wish, nominate a referee or referees (no more than two), who you feel are able too support your application.

REFEREE NO 1	
NAMES	
POSITION	
CONTACT DETAILS	
EMAIL	
TELEPHONE	

REFEREE NO	
NAMES	
POSITION	
CONTACT DETAILS	
EMAIL	
TELEPHONE	

DECLARATION

NAME	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	