



VICTORIAN BAR

DIVERSITY INTERNSHIP 2024

Overview

The Victorian Bar is offering up to six (6) paid internship positions to students from Culturally and Racially Marginalised backgrounds (CARM) who want to develop experience and connections with members of the legal profession.

The purpose of the internship is to secure the advancement of law students from CARM backgrounds in order to foster and promote greater cultural diversity in the legal profession, particularly within the ranks of the Victorian Bar.

The internship will operate like a vacation clerkship at a solicitors' firm but will place emphasis on the tasks undertaken by barristers and judicial officers.

The internship will be of interest to students considering a career as a barrister. Applicants do not need to have decided to pursue a career as a barrister in order to apply.

What is involved?

The successful interns must complete their 3-week internship between the period 1 - 31 October and 11 November to 6 December 2024.

The internship involves three consecutive weeks, with rotations as follows:

- a week with a barrister mentor at the Victorian Bar;
- a week at one participating jurisdiction; and
- a week at a second participating jurisdiction.

Although there is a firm preference for the internship to take place over consecutive weeks, alternative arrangements may be able to be made if there is a good reason. The order in which the internship will occur will be determined in consultation with each intern's barrister mentor and the relevant participating jurisdictions.

Barrister rotation

Whilst interning at the Bar, you will be placed with a barrister. You will sit in chambers and attend client conferences or hearings as appropriate. You may be asked to perform research tasks. The main focus will be on providing you with an opportunity to observe a barrister working on cases and to ask questions of them and their colleagues. The barrister will talk to you about the tasks she or he is undertaking at the time. You may also be invited to observe the work of other barristers on your mentor's floor.

Participating jurisdiction rotations

The participating jurisdictions for 2024 are:

- the Federal Court of Australia;
- the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia;
- the Supreme Court of Victoria;



- the County Court of Victoria; and
- the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the VCAT).

Whilst at the Courts or the VCAT, interns will be based in a judicial officer's chambers. You will attend hearings with the judicial officer and discuss the cases that they are working on. You may be asked to assist with research or administrative tasks under the supervision of the judicial officer or their staff.

On completion of the internship, you will be:

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

Eligibility

Applicants from a CARM background, who are not overseas students and who have successfully completed at least the second year of a law degree at a recognised university in Victoria are eligible to apply for the internship. Recent graduates who have not yet completed their practical legal training or been admitted to practice may also apply.

Favourable consideration will be given to applicants who demonstrate that they:

- have a commitment to the study of law;
- have no (or limited) connections with the legal profession (for example, they may be the first, or in the first generation, of their immediate family to attend university in Australia); or
- face financial hardship or other obstacles in gaining relevant work experience in the legal profession.

Application process

Applications are to be made by completing and submitting the attached form to the relevant contact person **at your law school**. Each law school is able to nominate up to 6 candidates for the internship. After selecting up to six applicants **each law school is responsible for forwarding on the successful applications to the Victorian Bar.**

By applying, each applicant:

- agrees that she or he meets the eligibility criteria set out above;
- agrees to be bound by the selection procedure and agrees that selection for the internship is at the absolute discretion of the Victorian Bar; and
- agrees, if successful, to commit their time to the full three weeks of the internship program.



Selection process

Each law school in Victoria may nominate up to six (6) student applications for consideration by the Bar.

Applications must be emailed to the Victorian Bar office (ed@vicbar.com.au) by **5.00pm on Friday, 30 August 2024.**

A selection panel (which may include members of the Victorian Bar's Equality and Diversity Committee, representatives of the Victorian Bar, and/or nominees of the participating jurisdictions) will select the successful interns in accordance with the criteria set out below.

Assessment of application

The selection process requires consideration by the selection panel of the following criteria:

- the stage of legal study reached by each applicant;
- the applicant's academic results in their legal studies;
- the applicants' interest in pursuing a career in law;
- whether an applicant would substantially benefit from the internship because they have limited existing connections with the legal profession (for example, the applicant is the first in their immediate family to attend university in Australia or part of the first generation to do so);
- whether the applicant would substantially benefit from the internship because they are experiencing financial hardship or face other obstacles to obtaining work experience in the legal profession; and
- the overall personal characteristics and circumstances of each applicant.

The selection panel is empowered to make such enquiries as are necessary or appropriate to consider and assess each application.

Selection will ordinarily be based on the applicant's written application form and supporting materials. The selection panel may, in its absolute discretion, compile a "short list" of candidates and conduct interviews of those applicants as part of the selection process.

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

Notification

Upon reaching its decision, the selection panel shall notify each applicant as set out below.



Successful applicants

By email attaching a copy of a letter of employment (to be signed and returned to the Victorian Bar by the applicant within 7 days).

Unsuccessful applicants

By email 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

1. *Employer*

The employer shall be the Victorian Bar Inc and the intern will report to and follow all such lawful directions of such person(s) who may be nominated by the Victorian Bar to supervise the intern 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 9:00 am to 5:00 pm each weekday, with an unpaid lunch break between 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm each weekday.

2. *Remuneration*

The intern will be remunerated at the same rate 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, totalling \$1,210.30 gross per week plus superannuation as required by law.

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

3. *Confidentiality*

The intern undertakes and agrees to keep confidential all information obtained in the course of undertaking his or her duties as an intern, save for matters or information that is public in nature (e.g. proceedings in open court). If in doubt, confidentiality must be maintained by the intern and appropriate guidance sought prior to any disclosure occurring (e.g. via social media or other mediums).

4. *Mentors*

Each intern will be assigned a barrister mentor, being a barrister approved by the Victorian Bar's Equality and Diversity Committee and/or the Student Engagement Committee.

Each intern will also have judicial mentor at each of the (2) participating jurisdictions where they complete their rotations during their internship.



5. *Appointment binding*

By signing the letter of employment, the intern agrees to:

- (a) the terms and conditions set out in the letter of employment;
- (b) continue to abide by this application procedure and selection criteria; and
- (c) abide by the rules of the Victorian Bar so far as those rules can apply to an intern.

Letter of employment

Each intern will be required to sign a letter of employment (in the form enclosed) before commencing the internship.

Information

Any enquiries about this application and selection criteria, or the internship program generally, may be made to Haroon Hassan and Clare Cunliffe, the Co-Chairs of the Victorian Bar's Equality and Diversity Committee on (03) 9225 8558 or via email: haroon.hassan@vicbar.com.au and clare.cunliffe@vicbar.com.au.

Enclosures:

- 1. Application form
- 2. Sample letter of employment