<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/s:</th>
<th>Deborah Ankor; Lucy Evans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of unit/course:</td>
<td>LLAW4212 Practical Legal Training: Transactional Legal Practice (in LLB/LP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discipline:</td>
<td>Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment sector:</td>
<td>Legal Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Numbers:</td>
<td>100-120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optional/compulsory:</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit bearing:</td>
<td>9 Units (= 2 subjects)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty/Department:</td>
<td>Flinders Law School</td>
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<td>Key words:</td>
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**Overview:**

Transactional legal practice is a 4th year skills-based capstone topic for the LLB/LP. It is a core double credit unit taught over a semester in a mode that involves both face-to-face teaching and informal group work with online communication and tasks.

It is designed to complement a compulsory placement unit that students generally undertake either immediately before, at the same time or immediately afterwards.

Because of the similarity to the work done in legal placements, the relationship between students and staff (that of supervisor/junior rather than teacher/student) and the explicit links to the workplace we describe this as “Virtual WIL”.

**Learning Outcomes and links to Graduate Attributes:**

Learning outcomes relate not only to the specific technical tasks required to be completed across a range of legal work areas but also to more generic skills such as collaboration and teamwork, timeliness, problem solving, communication and ethical behaviour. Although not specifically stated, one of the aims of this subject is to produce independent adult learners who recognise the need for lifelong learning.

As a result, effective completion of the subject means that students achieve the University’s graduate qualities – students who:

- GQ1. Are knowledgeable
- GQ2. Can apply their knowledge
- GQ3. Communicate effectively
- GQ4. Can work independently
- GQ5. Are collaborative
- GQ6. Value ethical behaviour
- GQ7. Connect across boundaries.

**Structure of the program:**

- The subject is taught in a professional environment in the city and expectations of students as young lawyers are made explicit. Face to face sessions mimic professional continuing education sessions. They are not recorded as lectures would normally be. No extensions are granted for tasks, as it is explained to students that time is critical in practice. Professional behaviour is modelled and expected at all times and in all communications with peers and staff. Attendance requirements
mimic the mandatory professional requirements for continuing professional development.

- Students are randomly allocated to groups to mirror small legal practices.
- Required tasks (assessment items – approximately 30 over the semester) are all authentic and would be required of junior lawyers. The tasks are competency based, and students are permitted to resubmit until competency is achieved. Some are collaborative group tasks and some are individual. Time frames for completion mirror those in legal practice and explicit links are made between completing tasks in the classroom and in practice.
- Legal practitioners in practice assist in the teaching of the subject by presenting face to face sessions, assisting in workshops and providing informal advice.
- Grade is NGP. This permits a culture of teamwork to get the job done.

Special features:
We call them “value-adds”

Each practice group of 4 students has a legal practitioner mentor for the semester to guide them through issues of professional expectations, culture, and preparation for employment. The mentor program consists of about 4 meetings between mentor and students, often in the mentor’s practice premises or over a coffee in a coffee shop frequented by the profession.

University Careers staff are involved in assisting students to recognise the value of the skills and attributes they gain from the subject. Legal Practitioner panels discuss employment in the legal profession, professional culture, etc.

“Standardised clients” (professional actors) are used for interviewing and communication skills.

The final assessment is by way of a 360° performance review based on a style of review used in legal practice in which they must reflect on their semester’s learning and justify their competency. This is conducted by confidential written questionnaire completed by the student and all group members and an individual interview with a member of teaching staff together with one of the legal practitioner mentors.

Process for implementation of WIL activity:

Preparation – Written and oral advice by staff on Day 1 as to expectations within the subject
Supervision – Teaching staff take on a role as practitioner supervisors
Engagement/Liaison with organisation/employer – Although there is not a specific employer or organisation involved, there is engagement with the legal profession generally through the mentor program and through its involvement with teaching and assessment.
Assessment and Moderation – see above
De-brief (students and organisation) – Both students and mentors are provided with opportunity to comment on the mentor program. In addition students go through a complete debriefing process as part of the performance review assessment.

Critical success factors:
Clear and explicit expectations
Explicit links between what students are asked to do and professional roles
High expectations for quality of work and behaviour
Evidence of positive outcomes for: students, university staff and industry/employers:
Feedback from students in performance review interviews indicates that the majority of students:
• gain confidence in their abilities;
• find that this subject assists them in their required legal office placement;
• self-identify (where appropriate) weaknesses in performance and volunteer for extra work;
• recognise improved capacity to work collaboratively;

Staff involved in the subject maintain an excitement in teaching in it due to the observed growth of students during the semester in relation to independence of learning, quality of work output and increased professionalism. Staff note the significantly higher attendance rates and engagement in these classes compared with other subjects.

General feedback from employers is that graduates of this degree are work ready. This is attributed by students to the authentic practical legal teaching in this subject and others taught in the law school.

Particular challenges and resolutions:
The size of the student cohort presents some difficulties for the 2 staff members involved in teaching.

Future plans:
Connection with an entrepreneurship course will provide real clients for some tasks in 2014. Staff are always looking for opportunities to create authentic experiences for students within a classroom environment.