

# Legal Aid WA: Practical Legal Training (PLT) Program 2023

## How to Apply

### What we are looking for in our selection process

We are looking for people who demonstrate they meet the criteria outlined below:

#### 1. A commitment to social justice and serving the community

We are interested in people with a strong and genuine desire to serve the community, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, and a demonstrated commitment to social justice.

We are looking for:

- Relevant experience with our client group (not necessarily in a legal context). Our client group includes children, lower socio-economic groups, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, mental illnesses or impairments and people who are disadvantaged in other ways.
- Any other relevant experience (e.g. volunteer work and other examples of serving the community).

#### 2. A commitment to the type of work we do

We are interested in:

- the units you study - including your grades if everything else is equal;
- people who are willing and able to work in more than one area of law;
- people with high ethical and professional standards;
- your ability to fit into our organisation;
- proven team players; and
- people who are prepared to assist and represent people on serious (and often distasteful) charges, and to deal with extremely difficult people (including drug/alcohol affected and mentally impaired clients).

#### 3. Relevant work experience

We are interested in any legal or non-legal work experience you have undertaken that has provided you with skills or knowledge relevant to our work.

We are looking for skills and experience in advocating for others, dealing with difficult people and de-escalating conflict, obtaining information from others, conducting research, communicating effectively, drafting documents and assisting with litigation.

#### 4. Strong written communication skills

We will assess your written communication skills based on your covering letter.

#### 5. Other relevant skills

We are interested in:

- your relevant qualifications;
- other languages;
- your life skills and experience; and
- your personal qualities and attributes.

## How can you improve your application?

You must be able to demonstrate through previous behaviours and actions (and not just words) that you are suitable and committed to the type of work we do.

### Do your homework

Learn more about us and what we do:

- Look at the contents of our website [www.legalaid.wa.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au)
- Read our Annual Report and other publications (these are available on our website).
- Go to court and watch what our lawyers do.

### Structure your units towards areas we practise in

Our legal practice covers criminal, family and civil law. We are also interested in dispute resolution processes.

We like relevant practical units, clinical university programs and extra curricular activities like Forensic Advocacy, Mooting and Trial Advocacy.

### Demonstrate your commitment to social justice and our client group

Working with our client group is not for everyone. Cultivate other relevant experience - be an active community member.

Relevant work experience includes:

- legal experience in Community Legal Centres/other legal organisations
- work with welfare organisations, community groups and relevant government departments; and
- clinical university programs.

### Proofread your application

Get someone else to proofread your application for you. As a lawyer you will be writing important letters on our behalf - this makes it even more important to check the sample of work you are sending us.

### Style

Use plain English wherever possible and always put the important things first. Remember that we have to read lots of applications - you need to make it easy for us and you must catch our attention on the first page.

Your covering letter should not exceed 2 pages in length. Additional pages will not be considered.

Make sure your application is focused on your target audience - us. The proformas sent to every firm on the Terrace really stand out.

### General information

Get your application in on time. Late applications cannot be accepted.

Make sure you attach a copy of your academic record! Without this we will not be able to assess your application against all of the selection criteria and this will impact how we score you overall.